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The Market Cart
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EAST ANGLIA

BY

HUGH MEREDITH

WITH 20 FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS
AND 50 PEN-AND-INK SKETCHES FROM
ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPHS

LONDON: ROBERT SCOTT
ROXBURGHE HOUSE
PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

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MADE IN ENGLAND

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Mousehold Heath

Crome

INTRODUCTION

AS the colour values of a beautiful carpet vary according to the angle from which it is viewed and lighted, so, as one looks upon this many-hued East Anglia one is constantly surprised by unexpected sheens, by the revelation of half-hidden threads of colour which lead the eye easily on and open up new possibilities of patterning. Even on the surface, East Anglia is a wonderfully colourful countryside. Its poppies have long been famed ; less known are its wide stretching bulb-fields, its enormous sheets of brilliant mustard, or the subtle colourings of the more sober-hued sugar-beet fields. Taken merely at what might be called its face value, East Anglia is interesting ; but when one begins to pick up a thread here, a small patch of colour there, and to let the fancy roam among the intricacies of pattern, the countryside is revealed as a district of the utmost fascination.

Here, at Dunwich, is a little thread of Christianity introduced by Felix in the seventh century : watch how it spreads among churches and monasteries and cathedrals through Suffolk and Norfolk into Lincolnshire, whence, suddenly, it expands into the story of the emigration which resulted in the United States of America.

There, in the north, at Weybourne, are pits which formed the most primitive dwellings thousands of years ago : the rudest form of domestic architecture.

Trace the thread by the Roman masonry of Burgh or Colchester and the Saxon of Holy Trinity, Colchester, or of Barnack, to the Norman glories of Norwich and Ely, and the Early English of Peterborough, and on again through many a fine church and hall to the bungaloid growths around the coast.

Here, on the west, at Normans Cross is a lad moving among the French prisoners his father is helping to guard. He is fascinated by their language and rapidly picks it up. Watch how his growing passion for foreign tongues brings him into contact with the Bible Society and so to the *Bible in Spain*, and to *Lavengro* and other works well known to Borrovians. Observe, too, how this man's passion for foreign tongues brings him into contact with similar passions in the minds of Cowell and Fitzgerald; how they in turn intermingle with the lives of gentle Bernard Barton, the melancholy Crabbe, the ageing Tennyson.

That broad streak of sea-blue in the north betokens the naval brotherhood presided over by Horatio Nelson: here and there bold dashes of scarlet betoken the warlike spirit which seems to have smouldered in almost every parish, to the infinite good of old England. And zigzagging in every direction is a multicoloured thread representing the curious interests of commerce, from the raising of woad to that of sugar-beet, from the imitation of Samian by the home-made ware of Castor to the products of the china factory at Lowestoft.

From these remarks it will be seen that there has been no lack of material out of which to compile this book; indeed, my problem has been rather to decide what to leave unsaid in order that space might be found for remarks concerning the less familiar aspect of East Anglian places and persons.

The inception of my part of this volume dates from the closing years of the Great War, when friendships formed in Flanders with East Anglian men were pleasantly continued in Norfolk and Suffolk. Barbed wire and Zeppelins and the perils and glories of the sea had brought East Anglia into very close touch indeed with the realities of War, and everywhere folk had a soft place in their hearts for those in uniform. So it was that often while signalling practice was being carried out from a church tower I had a pleasant and illuminating talk with the rector in the church below, and although usually all one could offer in exchange for local lore was very poor reasoning concerning the probability of "duration," in at least one instance it was possible to repay courtesy by flag-wagging, each morning, the very latest news of Allenby's Jerusalem advance to a dear old rector who had known Allenby as a choir-boy, and who could with difficulty await the tardy delivery of the morning paper.

Since then as I have walked and motored through the district I have been astounded at the constantly expanding range of interests encountered. Christmas Pantomime had taught that the final scene of "The Babes in the Wood" was laid in Norfolk; but I had hardly expected here also to encounter either R. L. Stevenson or Amy Robsart, and the pleasant surprise of meeting those two figures had its counterpart in a dozen other instances.

One's knowledge of a subject is accumulated little by little, often almost imperceptibly. A chance newspaper paragraph or an article in a periodical, however carelessly read, often leaves behind impressions which are unconsciously stored away until one day they spring to mind and are fitted into their place in the

mosaic. Further, there are books like the *Victoria County History* or *The Paston Letters*, or *Lavengro*, or the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, or the *Suffolk Garland*, into which one is continually dipping for the mere pleasure of reading and which yet contribute materially to one's little store of knowledge of a particular subject or area. For this reason, the following list of books consulted by no means represents the sum of my indebtedness ; and I have moreover to thank the proprietors of *Punch* for permission to print the little rhyme concerning King Cole on page 13, and the Editor of the *Illustrated London News* for his courtesy in allowing me to quote from Mr. J. Reid Moir's article on Mildenhall man.

On the ground I have used the Ward, Lock Guide where one was available, but among more exhaustive books consulted must be numbered a hundred others, varying from the *Colloquies* of Erasmus to *Pickwick* and *David Copperfield* ; from Kingsley's *Hereward the Wake* to the late Clement Shorter's biography (in the Wayfarer's Library) of George Borrow. Then there were Hilaire Belloc's *Hills and the Sea* ; Benson's *Life of Edward Fitzgerald* ; Tomkins's *In Constable's Country* ; Gardner's *History of Dunwich* ; Reyce's *Suffolk*, with the invaluable notes of Lord Francis Herbert ; Carlyle's *Past and Present* ; Suckling's *History of Suffolk* and Walter Rye's volume on Norfolk ; sundry writings of that erudite East Anglian, W. A. Dutt ; *The New Suffolk Garland* ; The Report of the Coast Erosion Commission and various papers contributed to the Journals of the Geologists' Association and to the transactions of the East Anglian learned societies.

Dedham Vale
Constable

THE ESSEX COAST NEAR WALTON.

CHAPTER I

CONSTABLE'S COUNTRY

Of Old King Cole of Colchester
Our information's small.
His fiddlers three we know, his glee,
His pipe and bowl—that's all.
E. V. L. in *Punch*.

ON the evidence thus neatly summarized by Mr. Lucas, Cole interpreted very lightly his duties as King; and but for the saving graces of merriment and music it is doubtful whether he would have been admitted to the pages of the nursery *Who's Who*. Historical investigation, however, suggests that Cole was possibly more sinned against than sinning, and that so far from being merely a wine-bibber he had the qualities of kingship. As early as the thirteenth century Robert of Gloucester decided that:

Coel was a noble man and much power hadde and honde.
Erle he was of Colchester here in this lande.
And after his name Colchester is cleped as iche understond.

And if other early historians may be believed he not only rallied Southern Britain when it was about to crumple abjectly before a Roman invasion, but made

such good terms with the enemy that the Roman commander married Cole's own daughter, Helena.

Unfortunately the historians of old may not always be implicitly believed. York has something to say concerning the parentage of Helena and her marriage to Constantine, and although Colkyng's Castle, and his Palace, and his Kitchen, are traditionally pointed out in Colchester, whose archives contain many a reference to the King, it must be admitted that there is a lack of evidence to confirm even the existence of the Merry Old Soul outside the realms of the nursery.

Such discrepancies do not prevent many a motorist from turning aside at Lexden to visit "King Cole's Kitchen." When last I saw it, a beautiful carpet of smooth turf and bright spring flowers covered the floor and birds sang in the roof timbers, which were already showing sprigs of green, so that altogether it looked a very promising place for a kitchen—though a suspiciously long way from the Castle! The little dell which is known as the Kitchen forms part of the garden of a house. I wonder if there are children there? What wonderful picnics they would have! Their imaginations, at any rate, would hardly have been warped by archæological exactitude, and it would not be necessary to offer the alternative occupant of the "Kitchen"—Cymbeline, or Cunobelin as he seems to have been known to his contemporaries.

It was in the first half of the first century A.D. that Cunobelin made Camulodunum his stronghold, and from which he administered a territory said to have comprised the southern half of Britain. This and other similarities of statement suggest very strongly that the originators of the Colchester legends of King Cole had in mind the statesmanlike performances of

this Cunobelin, of whom you may read in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*. Certainly there are fascinating points of resemblance in what we know of the two monarchs to which this is hardly the place to refer; but if you happen to be on Lexden Heath on one of those quiet hazy mornings of summer when the whole earth seems to buzz softly with happiness you may like to recall a certain "very excellent good-conceited thing; after a wonderful sweet air with admirable rich words to it":

Hark! hark! the lark at heavn's gate sings,
And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flow'rs that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin to ope their golden eyes:
With everything that pretty is—My lady sweet, arise.

No doubt "Hark! Hark! the lark" is but incidental music to the play of *Cymbeline*, but I confess to finding it easier to recall the burden of the song than to reconstruct the Palace peopled by that king and his court.

We have lingered overlong, perhaps, at Lexden, but before pushing on to Colchester it may be observed that the great lines of earthwork which here come down either side the road were built ages ago to connect the Colne with the Roman river and thus to form Camulodunum into a fine and strong promontory fort, guarded on the west by earthworks and on its remaining sides by the converging streams just named.

A dramatic glimpse of this strength of position is afforded those who motor into the town. There is little indication that we are on any kind of promontory until, running steadily up Head Street, the road appears to vanish, and the policeman directing traffic stands silhouetted against the sky. Cautiously approaching, we find the road does continue, but down

such a hill as would form an admirable defence in bygone days.

Uninstructed visitors can, and often do, drive through Colchester without any realization of its extreme antiquity. If you enter by the London road and leave by that which leads to Sudbury you will not easily catch a glimpse of any building to suggest that Colchester is aught but a fairly modern and prosperous market town. Even if you pass right through it from end to end there will only be the castle to suggest real age. That the Castle does very effectively, but the treasures of Colchester are only revealed to those who leave their cars and saunter through courtyards and byways. In fact, after the Castle the most prominent structure in Colchester is the red brick monstrosity holding on high the city's water supply.

THE SIEGE HOUSE, COLCHESTER.

When all is said and done, and the museum is excluded, there is very little about Colchester's Castle to recall the scenes of the long distant past. Yet it is a structure of quite exceptional interest. Possibly its charm arises from its picturesqueness, for although it consists only of four walls, those walls have been tinted and shaped by Time, which, at any rate on the score of beauty, is a far better "restorer" than some of our less enlightened local bodies.

William the Conqueror handed over the stewardship

of these parts to Eudo, and one of the first works of that efficient Norman was the erection of this castle. In its original state it must have been a formidable place, for its walls rose far higher than now and it was surrounded by the customary earthwork defences. Roman materials were used extensively, as you may see for yourself, and it is presumed that these lay readily to hand, for Eudo would seem to have built his Castle on the site of the Forum of the long-decayed Roman Colonia. Down below the present Castle are long and gloomy vaults. These are all that is left of the temple erected by the obedient Roman Colonists in the first century A.D. to the deity of Claudius, under whose auspices Britain had been invaded and who paid Camulodunum the compliment of selecting it as the goal of his triumphant ceremonial progress in A.D. 54 and as the site of the first Romano-British Colonia, to be named Claudiana in honour of himself and Victricensis in commemoration of the invasion.

The somewhat premature celebration of Britain's subjugation was duly avenged by Boadicea after a series of omens and portents that should have convinced Suetonius of the unwisdom of leaving so important a place as Colchester in the charge of a handful of veterans. Matters were critical in North and West, however, and the "S.O.S." had gone up.

Boadicea saw and seized her opportunity. Colchester fell to her fury and if all had gone well for her the Romans might never have returned to it. As things turned out, they did come back, and the stout wall which still encircles the city is a monument at once of the desperate strength of Boadicea and the determination of the Romans.

True to type, these Roman walls faced the four

points of the compass, and each was pierced by a gate. Curiously, the only gate left is that no longer served by a road. Of the North Gate, the East Gate and the Head Gate no trace remains, and the road which ran westward from the High Street to Lexden has also vanished. The western gateway through which it passed is still to be found, however, and an interesting relic it is, despite the vicinity of the water tower. The site of the Balkerne Gateway, as it is known, was excavated a few years ago by the Morant Club, who have affixed to it a complete plan from which one can gather a very useful impression of the original portal.

From this gateway there is a good view of the Roman wall running down hill, and you may follow it round to where it crosses High Street at the East Gate and runs behind a line of modern houses. This section boasts one or two bastions, and strolling down Priory Road it is rather amusing to note the many domestic uses to which the moderns put this ancient battle-scarred wall: here to support a chicken run, there to bear a clothes-line; elsewhere, and more fitly perhaps, to afford a hold to creepers and wall flowers.

Following the wall thus, one observes through the houses a series of gaunt brick arches raised high above the neighbouring structures, and by turning out of busy St. Botolph's Street by the plainly labelled lane one finds the ruins of St. Botolph's Priory Church. Great cylindrical piers of brick hold to the sky great rounded arches—naked all, now, but once comfortably roofed and windowed, plastered and frescoed and adorned with cunning and beautiful ornament. The deep recessed western doorway is still a thing of beauty, and if the interlacing brick arches in the arcade

above are less beautiful they have the added merit of rarity—being composed of brick—and are frequently used to illustrate the evolution from the rounded to the pointed arch.

These ruins are the sole remains of a great Augustinian priory founded towards the end of the eleventh century. For years it flourished; then came the Dissolution, followed by the siege. And the great brick cylinders hold to the heavens the great rounded arches as if in mute protest at the unappreciation of mankind—unappreciation which is now formally disowned since the remains are well cared for by His Majesty's Office of Works.

Though it happened two hundred and fifty years ago the Siege still dominates Colchester, and by "The Siege" I mean that of the seventeenth century. Not the farce of John's time—that was a mere Box and Cox affair—nor yet the cruel business of the tenth century when the Danes clung to Colchester as only an invading army can cling which has been driven almost back to the sea. In the end the mob turned the scale, and those Danes who escaped from Colchester very gladly took to their boats, we may be sure.

The Siege of 1648 was a full-dress affair. It opened with the traditional despatch of an envoy and the no less traditional coldness of his reception by the invaders. It continued for seventy-six days, with something more than the traditional amount of suffering on the part of the besieged.

A tragic story; which is, however, relieved by an example of calm fortitude that still bears re-telling. Justly or unjustly, two Royalist officers were condemned by Fairfax to be shot on the capitulation of Colchester: Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle.

The place of execution is now marked by a monument on the north side of the Castle. Lisle was the first to be shot, and before his mangled remains had been removed Lucas, his friend, was led forth. Though visibly moved by the awful scene, he paid his last respects to his friend and then addressed himself to the waiting soldiers, finally inviting them to come nearer, lest they should miss when the signal to fire was given. One of the soldiers remarked that the range was short enough for them. "I have been closer to you, friends, and you have missed me," was Lucas's almost wistful rejoinder. The two Royalist friends were buried in St. Giles's Church, hard by St. Botolph's, and many visitors make their way thither to look upon the deep-cut inscription in their monument against the chancel wall, and to dwell a few moments upon the memory of the two gentlemen commemorated.

While at St. Giles one can hardly fail to see the sole remnant of what was once the mightiest religious establishment in Colchester and for many miles round. St. John's Gateway is all that is left of a Benedictine Priory founded by that Eudo Dapifer who built the Castle shortly after the Conquest. It had its origin in a humble wooden chapel which suddenly sprang into fame as the scene of a series of minor miracles. Miraculously snapped asunder, the irons flew from a manacled man worshipping in the church. Mysterious lights and voices were noted, and altogether Eudo can have had no difficulty in persuading himself that he was doing the right thing in founding on such a site a really good class monastery. Certainly the establishment flourished and prospered: properties great and small were showered upon it, and what was

not presented appears to have been forcibly acquired —if we can believe the Abbey chronicles. The Abbots of St. John's were worthy sons of the church militant : it is sufficient to recall of one that, having a slight difference with a neighbouring Prior, he despatched a small party who pillaged the house of the unfortunate Prior—who had taken refuge elsewhere—burnt his crops, pulled down his barns, ruined his fishponds, and then for a whole month patiently awaited the Prior's emergence from his refuge ! So that—begging the pardon of the last Abbot, who forfeited his life rather than fall in with Henry VIII's plans—the sacking of the buildings during the Siege a century after the Dissolution seems all of a piece with the somewhat turbulent earlier history of the establishment ; and the modern barracks do not seem so incongruous after all.

The Abbey stood outside the city, which we may re-enter by the flight of steps at the Schere Gate. From the steps it is but a few yards to Holy Trinity Church, remarkable for its Saxon tower and in particular for the triangular-headed Saxon doorway in its western face. Colchester has two most interesting examples of evolution in architecture. The first we have seen at St. Botolph's : the interlacing round brick arches on the western front. The second is now before us : this little doorway of Saxon workmanship, its head formed of Roman bricks set on edge, but perpetuating the head formed by two blocks of wood or stone leaned together thus ∧, in the days when the art of building a round arch had been temporarily lost in Britain. The only other kind of arching then practised was the square head formed by supporting on two pillars a single horizontal block of stone or timber.

The eastern archway of the tower is roundheaded, and no doubt its builder prided himself on being so much more modern than he who had painfully put together the triangular-headed west doorway: though we may bless the tolerance with which he left the earlier work intact.

But the centuries suddenly spring back as we confront in the church the memorial of William Gilbert, "Father of Electricity." Saxons and Normans become people of pre-history while we dwell awhile with this modern fellow Gilbert. Modern? Surely—but Gilbert brings us little more than half-way from the Saxon door to our own times: it is close on four hundred years since he delighted Elizabeth and her court with a stick of sealing wax and some fragments of paper. What the gathering—whose portrait is in the city art gallery—would have said to a Royal Institution Christmas Juvenile lecture is an interesting speculation, though hardly, perhaps, germane to the subject of this book.

SAXON DOORWAY, HOLY TRINITY, COLCHESTER.

Colchester clings no less stoutly to its legendary connection with Helena than to its foundation by Cole, her father—as the attractive theories of the old historian picture him—and as water is held high at one end of the High Street as though to disprove Cole's alleged intemperate habits, so, towards the other end of the same thoroughfare, a great statue of Helena (holding the Cross she discovered) is hoisted to the skies as though to signify that her connection with Colchester is beyond dispute. One would have

Colchester Castle
C. 1810

thought that perhaps Boadicea deserved to be pinnacled above the Town Hall more surely than Helena, but after all in these days of cold disbelief in early legends it is something to find a town making no bones about its faith in tradition.

But observe what a provoking sequence of thought is aroused when you espy that gilded figure from the eastern quarter of the city, down by the Hythe. Viewed from the right spot you may contrive to get Helena and her cross in the background, while only a yard or two from where you stand is the Primitive Methodist Chapel in which Charles Spurgeon—to use his own words—" found salvation."

The church of St. Lawrence down by the Hythe is to be visited for a very different reason. Here you will be shown five ancient figures which are accounted for in the following manner. Years ago, it is related, four robbers entered the church one night with the intention of stealing the church plate. They were caught in the act, and the horrified churchpeople sentenced them to enclosure in the chamber over the porch, there to remain until they died of starvation. The fifth figure shown is that of a baker who, taking pity on the suffering quartet, threw them a loaf, was himself caught in the act and incarcerated with the robbers. For many years the figures were seen disconsolately looking through the bars of the porch chamber, but they are now in the tower.

So much for legend. Those who examine the roof of the church will, however, be disposed to connect the figures with the statues plainly missing from the hammer beams! Yet, how did the tale originate? I have not been able to trace its age, but it seems hardly likely that such a gruesome story would gain

currency without a measure of truth to support it. Elsewhere duly accredited tales are told of men being starved to death in just such a porch as the punishment for a heinous sin : it may well be that this little porch of St. Lawrence has been something more than the setting of a practical joke.

The Hythe is still Colchester's seaport, tawny-sailed barges coming right up to the electric tramways to collect flour from the mill behind the shot-riddled Siege House. The chance of a trip down the Colne is by no means to be despised. A surprising amount of shipbuilding goes on—at Wivenhoe Fitzgerald's *Scandal* was built—and at Brightlingsea the repair of yachts seems interminable. There are, too, the numerous interests in connection with the oyster fishery, particularly in the neighbourhood of Mersea.

Their maritime activity notwithstanding, it seems curious to reflect that at one time Rowhedge, Wivenhoe and Brightlingsea were subject to the whims of distant Sandwich, in Kent ; yet in the days when the Cinque Ports were powerful these places were " members " of that once doughty " limb." The influence of the Five Ports, indeed, extended far up the East Coast, and when we come to visit Great Yarmouth we shall see that their influence met with considerable respect. Brightlingsea has very happily revived its Cinque Ports associations in recent years. Annually we read of the election of the deputy and his assistants, the ceremony taking place, as of old, in the church tower, and although these officials take no hand, as such, in the governance of the parish it is pleasant to find old and honourable traditions rescued from oblivion.

Standing on the little " hard " of Brightlingsea one is faced with a squat specimen of the Martello towers

erected at the beginning of the last century by way of coastal defence, and if one gets a boatman to put one across to the opposite shore one will find a rough track which gradually becomes a lane that is the most picturesque approach to St. Osyth. It is a walk of some two miles, but there is plenty to see on the way : shipping entering and leaving the Colne, lone sportsmen shooting or fishing over the marshes, distant views of Brightlingsea and St. Osyth.

At the entrance to this mellow village is a water-mill. It stands at the end of a bridge across the " lake " commemorated in Crabbe's lines beginning :

> Come lead me, lassie, to the shade
> Where willows grow beside the brook,
> How well I knew the sound it made
> When dashing o'er the stony rill
> It murmur'd to St. Osyth's mill.

In the seventh century East Anglia produced several saintly women who underwent experiences that can hardly be described as other than miraculous. Ely Cathedral is a monument of the saintliness of Etheldreda, and to the same place was brought the body of her equally holy sister Withburga. At St. Osyth a priory was raised as the result of certain adventures which befell the lady of that name. Her eventful life culminated in her execution by marauding Danes. Pools of clear spring water mark the site of the execution, but nothing remains of the church to which she thereupon conveyed her off-struck head.

To-day the Priory is visited for the very fine workmanship of the penultimate Abbot, Vyntoner, who—happily for him, perhaps—died a few years before the Dissolution. The buildings are a sheer joy to all who can appreciate really good flint inlay work, varied with

brick diaper. In contrast to the coldness of the flint walls a beautiful oriel is worthy of note. Vyntoner also had ambitions for rebuilding the parish church —ambitions which were only partly realized owing to his death. Had his plans been carried out the church would have been even finer than it is to-day; the contrast between Vyntoner's spaciousness and the earlier styles of the east end of the church is not altogether in favour of the latter. But it is emphatically a building that repays study and before leaving do not omit to take a view of the western tower from a point to the south-west of the church.

St. Osyth is a particularly favourite haunt of visitors from Clacton—Clacton-on-Sea, the greatest of the trinity of Clactons in these parts.

The last decade has seen remarkable changes along the East Anglian coastline, but no other resort, I think, has made such strides as Clacton. Long strides and firm strides, too. The expansion and development have been carried out on attractive lines, and it is doubtful if those who knew Clacton in " the old days " would recognize it either in the spirit or the flesh to-day. That it is a healthy place goes without saying: residents tell a very different tale from that recorded by Daniel Defoe, who during his tour of the Eastern Counties came across a man—a " merry fellow " Defoe calls him, tongue-in-cheek. This old man informed Defoe that the marshlands were at that time exceedingly unhealthy, and only those people who had been bred and born on them could withstand the damp and mist. It was the custom of the men of the marshes to go for their wives into the uplands; but few of these young women were able to resist the agues and fevers of their new homeland; with the amazing result—recorded as

St. Osyth Priory
C. 1815

an ordinary everyday event by Defoe's "merry fellow"—that many of the marsh men had had as many as twenty wives, or even more, since as soon as one succumbed to the marsh climate off they went to the uplands for another! A merry fellow indeed!

Such husbands and wives, lads and sweethearts, as I have seen at Clacton have always looked exceedingly fit, and there is no doubt that the climate of the place has had an important bearing on its development.

Of the churches of Clacton the most interesting is the old parish church at Great Clacton. It is largely built of Roman bricks, though for the most part a twelfth-century structure; a distinctly interesting blend of Roman material and Norman workmanship. The western tower was clearly a later addition. In it the bells are now hung; formerly they occupied the little cradle over the aisle of the church, and were approached by a passage in the thickness of the wall. It is noteworthy that this same passage was so altered when the tower was built that it still gives access to the bells, though they are now in the tower.

Between Clacton and Frinton are marked Great and Little Holland, but to one visiting the latter for the first time and noting how the entire village seems to have arisen since the War, the question occurs, what *was* Little Holland before it was built? It is the sad old story of sea encroachments. Even in the calmest days of summer it is easy to observe how the friable cliffs along this coast fall ready victims to the incoming tide, and when to the more furious onsets of winter seas are added the lash of wind and rain, and the insidious action of frost and thaw, erosion goes on at a desperate pace.

Frinton is the most modern of the Essex resorts.

It is a place of much charm on account of the lavishness with which the site was laid out. One can picture the promoters of many a seaside resort saying to themselves "now how many houses can we squeeze into this area: we won't worry about gardens." At Frinton the opposite line of reasoning is suggested; one can well imagine that the first thought of the founders was gardens, a secondary consideration being houses to shelter the fortunate people into whose care the gardens were to be committed. Whichever way the founders of Frinton reasoned, the result is most happy; and the whole place takes its note from this spacious planning, every form of open-air recreation thriving abundantly.

After the freshness of Frinton, Walton-on-the-Naze has an air of veneration. Actually Walton *is* a very ancient place, though the old town now lies beneath the waves. From earliest times its concern seems to have been to beat back the sea; the very name pictures a town sheltered behind a stout wall or embankment. Modern seawalls and groynes have done much to arrest the progress of Neptune in recent years, but not so very long ago Walton was forced to realize that it was in imminent danger of losing its Naze. At the back of the town are the well-known backwaters, favourite haunt of all sorts and conditions of boatmen, from juveniles exultantly paddling their own canoes to the seasoned yachtsman who has run round from Maldon river or Burnham and appreciates the snug berth Walton offers. These "broads" are separated from the sea only by a narrow neck of land which in turn connects the Naze with Walton. Only the erection of a stout embankment prevented the sea from swooping over into the backwaters and so converting

the Naze into an island. Rather a nice little island it would have made, too, for its southern slopes are pleasantly wooded and its summit commands splendid views towards Harwich and Felixstowe.

Ere it boasted of being—what by the way it is not—on the Naze, Walton proclaimed its situation in the Soken. Thorpe-le-Soken and Kirby-le-Soken we still have, but alas for mediæval customs, the Sokens are no longer the rigidly preserved "peculiars" they once were, and little is left of that fascinating organization but memories.

Away to the southward, and more easily visited in connection with Wivenhoe, is Great Bentley, with a magnificent hammer-beam roof: a really remarkable specimen of early sixteenth-century work. On the way to Great Bentley, Great Bromley is passed: the church is notable for some grotesquely carved capitals.

Not far from Bentley—the "Great" has no apparent justification—is Elmstead Market, on the main road. Elmstead Church lies a mile away at the end of a tree-lined avenue. It should be seen by all lovers of simple country churches. It is a fourteenth-century building in the main, but has been restored and added to, but without having been robbed of its original air of sincerity: an air which is enhanced by the plain-glazed windows and the clean scrubbed box-pews. In the south aisle is a wooden effigy, said to represent the crusading Sir Laurence de Taney, to whom the charter for the neighbouring Elmstead Market was granted in 1253. Considerable interest centres in the crouching figure at the feet of the knight.

The tower appears never to have been completed, but it has probably gained in picturesqueness for that very reason. Capped with a little pyramidal roof

of tiles it is a very fitting entry to one of the most fascinating little churches in this corner of Essex.

That corner of the county with which these pages are concerned terminates to the north-east in a narrow promontory almost entirely occupied by Dovercourt and Harwich.

Of modern Dovercourt nothing much need be said, but the old village has a church embodying quite a number of interesting associations. It is a twelfth-century building with a massive tower which can be clearly seen against the sky line from many distant places.

The lych-gate of the church was a personal gift from Queen Victoria in memory of the English and German soldiers who died at Dovercourt from disease contracted during the Walcheren Expedition of 1809. The German Emperor presented a stained-glass window, designed by himself.

The church stands a little back from the busy traffic of to-day, but there were times when it was itself the goal of streams of pilgrims: for of old it had a rood screen upon which stood a figure credited with miraculous powers of healing. So many were the pilgrims that the church doors were never closed, and Old Dovercourt became a very prosperous place. Then came the Reformation, and with it three men who in an excess of puritanical zeal entered the church one night, removed rood and image to the village green and there burnt them. It had long been a legend that any showing disrespect to the Dovercourt rood would suffer sudden death, and the legend received support from the speedy execution of the zealots, who were hung in gibbets.

Harwich, long a busy and prosperous naval base,

particularly in connection with destroyer flotillas, has since the War worn a somewhat dejected air owing to the departure of the familiar blue-uniformed figures. It is a queer jumble of streets and quays and light-houses, and a stranger endeavouring to find his way into or out of the town begins to doubt his senses as he is continually encountering entirely fresh sea-fronts. A local writer has expressed the situation very well. "There is no lack of sea view in Harwich: the difficulty is to get a land view."

During his *Tour of the Eastern Counties* Defoe came, of course, to Harwich, which in his time was known "for being the port where the packet boats between England and Holland go out and come in. The inhabitants are far from being famed for good usage to strangers, but, on the contrary, are blamed for being extravagant in their reckonings in the public-houses, which has not a little encouraged the setting-up of sloops, which they now call passage boats, to Holland, to go directly from the river Thames." Owing to its favourable situation, Harwich has long been an important port. It must be one of the few minor ports around our coast which during long centuries have not succumbed to silting. In 1340 Edward III set sail from Harwich with a fleet of some 260 vessels, for the great naval battle of Sluys, and during succeeding centuries it saw the arrival and departure of some of the most prominent figures in our island story. It became of great importance with the opening of the Great Eastern Railway in the sixties, but was in turn eclipsed by Parkeston quay, a mile up-river. Harwich is now the English terminus of the cross-Channel train ferry: that cumbrous looking vessel which made its début at Richborough during the War.

The advantage of a train ferry is that whole trains may be shunted on to the deck without unloading, and at the termination of the voyage the trains may be shunted onto the permanent way and immediately hauled off to their final destination. Considerable saving of time and " breakages " is thus effected.

It is sad to think that Harwich, with its magnificent Wartime record, should now lie forsaken : but it has the compensation of its memories, which are awakened by the concrete " pill-boxes " and other defence works still to be seen on and around the promontory.

Ramsey and Great Oakley, Wix and Bradfield, all have churches worth inspection. Bradfield has a fourteenth-century bell said to be inscribed with the quaint boast " I am Koc of this floc." But Bradfield is chiefly noteworthy for the sake of its moated hall which has excellent brickwork. The best part is perhaps the diapered south front, with its crow-stepped gable and beautiful moulding.

Failing the motor, the best way to approach the Constable Country is on foot across the fields from Manningtree, where is a railway station. The neighbourhood of Manningtree was the birthplace of the notorious Matthew Hopkins, the witch-finder. In 1644 he was, with others, instructed by Parliament to " perform a circuit" for the discovery of witches, and made a promising beginning by finding no fewer than eight alleged witches within a mile of Manningtree market-place. Eventually he was hoist by his own petard. His standard test for witches was to tie their thumbs and big toes together and throw them into the nearest pond ; if they sank, they were innocent, but if they managed to keep afloat the feat was held to prove possession of supernatural powers and the

unfortunate floater was treated as a proven witch. Hopkins himself took his turn at the game at last, and by keeping afloat he—

> Proved himself a witch
> And made a rod for his own breech;

a rod which was quickly and energetically applied, we may be sure.

Manningtree is a quietly busy little place to-day, but at one time its cattle fair was very famous, and there is an allusion to part of the ceremonial in Shakespeare's reference to Falstaff (Prince Hal speaking), "That roasted Manningtree ox with the pudding in his belly."

FLATFORD BRIDGE.

The story goes that as the Ipswich–Colchester train made its way across the Stour valley one day, two of its passengers fell to admiring the scenery.

"'Constable's Country' they call it," said one—a sturdy farmer.

The point of the story being that the farmer's *vis-à-vis* was none other than John Constable himself! Constable's Country is no mere fiction, however, as you will realize if before visiting it you have put in an hour at the National Gallery or the "Tate" and have

renewed your acquaintance with such works as "The Cornfield," "Flatford Mill," "The Hay Wain" and other highly characteristic examples of Constable's landscapes. If you have done so, or even if you have come fortified with a good set of reproductions of Constable landscapes, you will be able to tell almost where the Constable Country ends and where it begins: and if once you have visited the ground and identified the scenes of some of the pictures, a half-hour at Trafalgar Square or at the Victoria and Albert Museum will prove almost as refreshing as the original visit!

The "capital" of the Constable Country is Dedham, a beautiful little village reached by a lane on the right of the road going northward from Colchester to Ipswich. Dedham is best visited at a time when the motor-coach siege has been temporarily raised; it is not seen at its best when the charming main street is lined with cars and the air is poisoned with the fumes of oil and petrol.

Though it is known principally by reason of its connection with Constable, Dedham was at one time a busy little hive of woollen manufacturers, the industry having been introduced, presumably, by Flemish immigrants in the fifteenth or sixteenth century. They settled in one little corner of the town which still bears their name—a picturesque place of tiles and timber. So intimately was the name of Dedham connected with the weaving trade that an eighteenth-century topographer informs us that the vast numbers of sprats consumed by the Dedham weavers during winter gave rise to the custom of calling those fish "Weaver's Beef"; while a more lasting memorial of the old industry is the parish church, built in the sixteenth century by one Thomas Webbe and his son

John, both local weavers. The tomb of the elder Webbe is in the north aisle.

At Dedham lingers a custom which must have long died out everywhere else: the ringing of the Gleaners' Bell. This is still carried out for twelve days during harvest time, ten minutes ringing in the morning, and ten at evening, to tell the gleaners when they may proceed to gather their slender harvest.

The large Mill is, of course, not that known to Constable, but the Lock is still there, and you may spend a happy hour trying to recapture the position from which he painted "Dedham Lock": that picture of which he wrote: "My lock is liked at the Academy, and indeed its light cannot be put out, because it is the light of nature, the mother of all that is valuable in poetry, painting, or anything else where an appeal to the soul is required." A remark which applies no less truly to every one of his landscapes, for Constable's fame has been built upon the truth with which he reproduces not only the appearance of the countryside but its emotions—the passing effects of rain-clouds and sunlight—and "suggests, with swift and unsurpassable power," the sense of glitter and motion. Some liberties he did allow himself to take with his subjects; as, for instance, in the matter of composition, and if you have been comparing a copy of "The Mill, Dedham," with the actual scene you will probably have concluded, with Mr. H. W. Tompkins, that Constable probably placed the church tower a little farther to the right than its actual position warranted.

The best way to go from Dedham to Bergholt, where Constable was born, is by the lane running south-eastward from the village to Jupes Hill Farm (there is a footpath running parallel with the lane if you can

find its beginning at Dedham), in the direction of Manningtree. Near the farm the path crosses a branch of the Stour and leads out across the flat meadows to Flatford Mill, Willy Lott's House and a small patch of country that lives in a dozen or more of Constable's finest paintings. "The Valley Farm" and "The Hay Wain" both include the house of his friend Willy Lott, and it is pleasing to note that through the generosity of an Ipswich gentleman the Mill and Willy Lott's House have been acquired as national possessions, and their decay arrested by well-done repairs.

It is a lovely little corner, one in which to muse away a whole day; one, moreover, that is very little altered since Constable rambled here. "These scenes," wrote Constable, "made me a painter, and I am grateful." Curious to reflect that his landscape work was so little appreciated that until he was well over forty years of age he was best known as a painter of portraits!

Strolling now up the lane from the riverside to East Bergholt we come, a hundred yards or so from the centre of the village, to a lane bearing off on the left and leading again back towards the river. Follow the lane for a few minutes and then just where the lane makes a sharp turn to the right, get out your reproduction of "The Cornfield." The scene is easily recognizable: though, as Mr. H. W. Tompkins has pointed out in his charming book *In Constable's Country*, "the church tower in the background is not that of Dedham. In point of fact it was put into the picture by artistic licence, for it never existed. For confirmation of this readers may consult a letter written by Constable's son to the *Art Journal* in 1869." However that may be, the essential character of "The Cornfield" is still there.

The Hay Wain

Constable

So to East Bergholt, where Constable first saw the light, in 1776. The actual birthplace is no longer to be seen, but that is of comparatively small account, for the spirit of Constable is still over all the surrounding scenery.

Constable was the son of a miller, concerning whom many a good yarn has been preserved. For certain reasons of his own, he desired to obtain vacant possession of a cottage which he owned, but from which the tenant then in occupation refused to budge. Constable senior tried every artifice, but in vain; and his lack of success was the more vexing since the pertinacious tenant refused to give a sound reason for his obstinacy. Until at last there came a day when he confessed that if he departed from that cottage he would never put a razor to his face again. It sounded like a vow, but further inquiry disclosed that for as long as he could remember the tenant had been accustomed to strop his razor on a certain step in the cottage, and as he could not conceive any other habitation providing him with similarly handy stairs he was naturally somewhat reluctant to move! Had he but stated the trouble at the outset, his anxiety would never have been aroused; for Constable immediately ordered the step to be removed and presented to his tenant, who no doubt carried it in triumph to the new abode his landlord had provided for him! The story suggests a rather amusing parliamentary debate on the question of "landlord and tenant" and leasehold reform!

Bergholt is one of those churches whose bells are mounted separately in the churchyard. The reason for this is not exactly original, though doubtless sound. The Bergholt people, in fact, found when building their church that each night by mysterious means the

masonry they had placed to form a tower was removed and dumped in the churchyard. Not once or twice, mark you ; but several times. So often, in fact, that the good folk could not but realize there was "something in it." Therefore they built the church without completing the tower ; and the bells hang in a wooden "cage" in the churchyard to testify to the Devil's displeasure at the erection of a church here at all !

About midway between Manningtree and Ipswich the railway sends out a spur westward to Hadleigh, long a centre of the woollen trade. It still retains many reminders of earlier days in the shape of parget-ing and gables, but my impressions of Hadleigh are ever coloured by Foxe's description of the final home-coming of Rowland Taylor, Hadleigh's vicar in the sixteenth century. The whole passage is so good that it deserves quotation here : "Now when the Sheriff and his company came against St. Botolph's Church, Elizabeth cried 'O my dear Father ! Mother ! Mother ! here is my father led away.' Then cried his wife, 'Rowland, Rowland, where art thou ?'—for it was a very dark morning, that the one could not well see the other. Dr. Taylor answered, 'Dear wife, I am here,' and stayed. The Sheriff's men would have led him forth, but the Sheriff said, 'Stay a little, masters, I pray you, and let him speak with his wife,' and so they stayed. Then came she to him and he took his daughter Mary in his arms, and he, his wife and Elizabeth kneeled down and said the Lord's Prayer, at which sight the Sheriff wept apace, and so did divers others of the company. After they had prayed he rose up and kissed his wife and shook her by the hand, and said 'Farewell, my dear wife, be of good comfort, for I am quiet in my conscience. God shall stir up a

father for my children.' Then said his wife, 'God be with thee, dear Rowland, I will with God's grace meet thee at Hadleigh.' All the way, Dr. Taylor was joyful and merry as one that accounted himself going to a most pleasant banquet or bridal. . . . Coming within a two mile of Hadleigh he desired to light off his horse, which done he leaped and set a risk or twain, as men commonly do in dancing. 'Why, Master Doctor,' quoth the Sheriff, 'how do you now?' He answered, 'Well, God be praised, good master Sheriff, never better; for now I know I am almost at home. I lack not past two stiles to go over, and I am even at my Father's house.'"

WOLSEY GATE, IPSWICH.

The worthy Doctor was burned at the stake on Aldham Common on the 8th day of February, 1555.

One of the few facts unlikely to escape the memory of "every schoolboy" is that Ipswich is "on" the Orwell. It is one of the few instances, too, where the fact is worth remembering, for Ipswich probably owes its origin to its position at the head of the Suffolk river, and it undoubtedly owes much of its prosperity, even now, to the facility with which coasting and other vessels bring raw materials to its

iron works and agricultural implement factories, and with which they help to distribute the finished goods to the distant world.

Ipswich, notwithstanding the geography books, is only just "on" the Orwell, for above the town the much narrowed stream is known as the Gypping—a fact which helps to explain the name of the town, an obvious adaptation of Gyppeswic.

To-day Ipswich is one of the most thriving places in East Anglia, fringed around with modern (but not too picturesque) suburbs. Many contend, too, that the central part of the town is entirely modern and bereft of any Dickensian or other flavour of past days. To that I demur. Multiple-shops and plate glass have not altogether robbed the ancient capital of Suffolk of an air reminiscent of past times—an air which the tortuous streets do much to support.

"In the main street of Ipswich, on the left-hand side of the way, a short distance after you have passed through the open space fronting the Town Hall, stands an inn known far and wide by the appellation of the 'Great White Horse,' rendered the more conspicuous by a stone statue of some rampacious animal with flowing mane and tail, distantly resembling an insane cart horse, which is elevated above the principal door. The 'Great White Horse' is famous in the neighbourhood in the same degree as a prize ox, or county-paper-chronicled turnip, or unwieldy pig—for its enormous size. Never were such labyrinths of uncarpeted passages, such clusters of mouldy, ill-lighted rooms, such huge numbers of small dens for eating and sleeping in, beneath any one roof as are collected together between the four walls of the 'Great White Horse' at Ipswich."

It is still a great hotel, though more familiar with petrol motors than with the coaches of Dickens's day, and wandering through its corridors you can sympathize with poor Mr. Pickwick as he searched so vainly for his bedroom after he had gone to recover the watch he had left on the table downstairs. Nor can the picture be forgotten of Mr. Magnus, complete with the "suit of clothes in that bag and a hat in that box which, I expect, in the effect they produce, will be invaluable to me, sir"—when on the morrow he came to propose marriage to the lady whom he had been careful to stalk until she was travelling. "I think an inn a good sort of a place to propose to a single woman in, Mr. Pickwick. She is more likely to feel the loneliness of her situation in travelling, perhaps, than she would be at home!"

In Dickens's day perhaps, but not now, methinks as I gaze round the well-filled dining-room at the very self-possessed ladies who, from the circumstance that they occupy lonely tables, may be judged to be travelling alone.

Poor Mr. Pickwick; poor Mr. Magnus—poor Miss Witherfield! Stuck in front of a house in which such "rampacious" happenings occurred, the sign of the "White Horse" cannot rightly be expected to appear anything less than rampacious!

Only a step from the "Great White Horse" is another building that is almost as famous as Ipswich itself—in fact there are those who aver it is even more famous. This, "the ancient house," is a splendidly ornamented specimen of sixteenth-century work. The Butter Market frontage is marked by four projecting windows, while above the wide-eaved roof four gables rise to correspond with the windows.

Both street frontages of the house are most elaborately pargeted, and worthy of careful examination, since definite subjects are portrayed. On the less important frontage is a very sermon in plaster, for in one picture we are shown Atlas shouldering the burdens of the world and nearly crippling himself in the effort, while above him appears a carefree farm-lad. . . . One of the designs on the Butter Market frontage—that of Charles II—has given rise to a local superstition that the unfortunate Charles hid here on his flight after the tragedy of Worcester. The supposition fitted very comfortably into the discovery of a hiding-place and the circumstance that the house was at one time in the occupation of the Sparrowe family —well known as friends of the King. Unfortunately for the story, however, it can be practically proved, from the various contemporary accounts of the flight, that Charles did not visit East Anglia on his way from Boscobel to the coast: and in view of the hardships of the journey one feels glad that such an extension of the perils was not necessary.

THE ANCIENT HOUSE, IPSWICH.

Ipswich has authentic associations with Court life in no less a personage than Thomas Wolsey, Archbishop of York, Cardinal and Lord High Chancellor. Strange as it may seem in view of the splendour with which Wolsey surrounded himself, his father was an Ipswich butcher, and his birthplace in College Street is still pointed out. The thoroughfare commemorates the educational establishment founded by Wolsey and of which Shakespeare wrote :

> Those twins of learning that he raised in you,
> Ipswich and Oxford, one of which fell with him,
> Unwilling to outlive the good that did it.

There is little in the surviving brick gateway to suggest that Ipswich was a " twin " to Christ Church, Oxford, in any more than the technical sense.

One cannot be long in Ipswich without recalling its associations with Thomas Gainsborough, the artist. More is said concerning Gainsborough when we come to Sudbury, the place that gave him birth, but here it may be remembered that at Ipswich the silhouette portrait of Tom Peartree drew the attention of Philip Thicknesse to the young artist's work, and although in view of the present reputation of Gainsborough—and it was never higher—it seems extraordinary enough that a man of such outstanding genius should be in any way beholden to such an old meddler as Thicknesse appears to have been, yet he supplied just that amount of influence that enabled Gainsborough to make a start on his career proper. He was " the bottom rung " without which the ladder might not have been attempted. Recently Ipswich has done honour to Gainsborough by holding a really magnificent exhibition of his works, lent by fortunate

owners in various parts of the world. Such collections as these are rarely seen and are quickly dispersed. But if you go (as you must) to the charming old Christchurch Mansion which serves Ipswich as Museum and Art Gallery, you will see several excellent specimens of Gainsborough's earlier work, not omitting the momentous Tom Peartree.

In the days of good Queen Bess there lived in Hatton Court, Ipswich, a young man known as Chris Hatton, who in these terpsichorean days (and nights) would have passed for even more of a hero than he was accounted in the sixteenth century, for he owed his advance in life literally to his dancing. He danced himself into the good graces of Elizabeth, who made him first a Gentleman Pensioner and subsequently, as Sir Christopher Hatton, Lord Chancellor (what a contrast to that other Ipswich Chancellor—Wolsey !). Like all favourites, he arrived at his day of extinction ; and the story goes that disconsolate brooding over his fall from grace induced a dangerous illness. Elizabeth was told how he lay dying at his house in Ely Place, London, and there she forthwith visited him, herself tempting him with broths and begging him to recover " for her sake." " Alas," came the reply, " no pulleys will draw up a heart once cast down, though a Queen herself should set a hand thereto." . . . A sad enough retort for one who had danced himself into fame.

The traveller will, ere leaving Ipswich, pay a visit to the more famous of its churches : St. Mary at Key or Quay—duly distinguished with a large gilt key—and with a celebrated brass ; St. Clements, in Fore Street, where Sam Weller " endeavoured to dissipate his melancholy " and near which in Church Lane

Sam Weller saw Job Trotter emerge from a green gate—the same gate through which the protesting Mr. Pickwick had been carried *en route* to his interview with the magistrate. As the other churches are not of particular note, the remaining spare time should be spent in visiting Gainsborough's Lane, which runs down to the river a mile or so below Ipswich. Useless to give directions, for building is already approaching the Lane, but anyone in the neighbourhood will tell which of the short cuts are still available. The Lane lives in several pictures of Gainsborough's, but most notably in *The Market Cart*, and having seen this Lane and also something of the Dedham and Bergholt country of Constable, a pleasant and profitable hour may be spent in the National Gallery comparing the works of the two Suffolk artists.

THE NORWICH ROAD, NEAR IPSWICH.

Very enjoyable is it to float down the Orwell on some fine morning of summer, especially if a thin veil of mist hangs over the waterway, awaiting dispersal by the sun. Not a sound breaks the stillness but the occasional plop of a rising fish, or the distant bump of some one baling out or tinkering with a boat moored alongside the bank. And there is a most entrancing smell—the "muddy" odour from the sloping banks mingling deliciously with the salt-tainted air wafted in from the sea.

Trees slide past in the mist, their more delicate

branches hardly visible, and an occasional building is also dimly made out. Soon, on the right bank, we may catch a glimpse of the remarkable tower at Freston which is so intimately bound up with the story of that name written by Cobbold, who also threw a cloak of romance over the district with his better-known story of Margaret Catchpole. This is no morning for archæological exactitude. The Tower peers high above the mist-veiled ground at its feet, and as the sun touches its upper storeys with gold we may recall Cobbold's explanation that the tower was built by Latimer for Ellen de Freston as a place of study. There are six storeys, and each was set apart for a different kind of employment. Each, moreover, was to be visited at a certain hour of the day, thus :

From 7 until 8 a.m. Ellen was to dispense charity on the ground floor.

From 9 until 10, she was to do tapestry work on the first floor.

Thence until noon she was to discourse sweet music on the next floor.

And from noon until 1 p.m. painting followed music, on the floor above.

Still ascending, the studious Ellen was to digest literature from 1 until 2, and at evening she was to ascend to the topmost storey and there study astronomy.

No light programme for a girl of thirteen years of age! Yet, as one might perhaps expect, all these things she faithfully performed, and seems to have acquired no little *savoir faire* in the performance thereof, for when Wolsey, Latimer and De Freston—a moderately formidable trio—visited her she disdained to show them the handiwork she was then

engaged upon, " namely a piece of tapestry representing the death of Harold at Battle." Neither could she be persuaded to beguile them with the sound of her harp. Instead, she led her guests to the top of the tower and as they sat themselves to breakfast she blandly begged them to let their conversation be guided by the things with which they were surrounded !

Rivalling the precocious Ellen in the interests of holiday readers is Margaret Catchpole, whose rather painful history we will not go into here ; but we cannot altogether forget the story, for a mile or so downstream from Freston—near the border of Woolverstone Park—is another tower, known as the Cat House. It took its name—according to Cobbold—from a stuffed white cat which always formed a prominent feature in one of the windows visible from the river. The cat is said to have been a family favourite which had met an untimely end in a rabbit snare, and favourable comment is usually passed on the tenant of the tower for his act in having the cat stuffed and in placing the mummy so prominently. But a less kindly school hints darkly that sometimes the cat was *not* there : and at such times, by the strangest of coincidences of course, there would be found in the neighbourhood certain revenue men likely to be interested in any smuggling that might have been planned to take place just then !

Orwell Park and Broke Hall slide by on the opposite bank—Broke Hall with memories of Admiral Broke, of the *Shannon-Chesapeake* encounter—and then on the right bank we float past pretty little Pin Mill.

Shotley is known the world over for its naval school, and the probabilities are that we shall have a chance of seeing some of the youngsters at work

or play as we drift downstream. Now, however, it behoves us to out-oars and take some thought to our course, for we are entering the spacious harbour of Harwich. Not so busy as during the War, it is true, but yet sufficiently alive with craft of all kinds to make it necessary to keep a wary eye. Parkeston, with its derricks and miniature liners, appears across to the right as we round Bloody Point, while straight in front Harwich itself looks more inviting than at closer quarters. We, however, keep over to the north-eastern side of the harbour, presently mooring against the pier from which a motor bus will quickly whisk us off to Felixstowe.

What a change, this bus, after the silent drifting downstream from Ipswich! Yet there is much to be seen at our journey's immediate end, even if the way does not invite lingering to the same extent as the Orwell.

The highly attractive resort of Felixstowe, in common with others along the East Anglian coast, has in recent years undergone a distinct change. Whether this is due to the initiative of the London and North-Eastern Railway or to the increased accessibility of the place owing to the popularity of motoring, I am not prepared to say, but Felixstowe is no longer the slightly "exclusive" place of former years.

The disappearance of the resort known but to a "select few" is one of the phenomena overtaking our coastline. Here and there are places so situated that it is possible to keep the madding motor-charabanc crowd at bay, but from Land's End to John o' Groats and from Lynn to Milford Bay the car and the "charry" have riddled through and through the long-boasted exclusiveness of favoured seaside places.

This is a pity, if only for the reason that in the wake of the charabanc come numerous other appurtenances—cheap refreshment houses and sideshows of the kind that try to hide their tawdriness by their noise, for instance—so that in a very few years the former individuality of each of our resorts will be lost, and Frinton, Felixstowe and Southend will be labelled succinctly "seaside". Fortunately local interests are waking to this peril and are taking steps to guide the increased patronage along wise lines. May they be successful in their efforts. In any case, looking ahead a few years, it is a curious picture which rises, of an interminable row of hotels, boarding houses and pavilions from the Tweed right round to the Solway. There will no doubt be excellent arterial roads along the coast, and it will matter little whether you stay at Felixstowe or Yarmouth, Frinton or Walton-on-the-Naze, since roads and cars will give you the attribute of ubiquity and you may nearly, if not quite, be in two places at once!

It is rather surprising that nobody has, apparently, taken the first two syllables of Felixstowe as Latin and made due importance of the word "happy", for happy does hit off the amenities of the place very aptly. Actually, it obtained its name—so legends assure us—from the circumstance that no less a personage than St. Felix himself here landed on arrival from Burgundy. The sea has erased all signs of his dwelling place, as also of the buildings erected here by the Romans; but you may discover remains of a "palace" said to have belonged to Edward III. But nobody worries much about archæology at Felixstowe; golf, tennis, bowls and the sport of the sands supply sufficient interests for most holiday-makers.

BECCLES.

CHAPTER II

FROM THE DEBEN TO THE WAVENEY

THREE broad estuaries of about equal length run down to the sea within a few miles of Felixstowe. Those of the Stour and the Orwell we have already seen ; that of the Deben is to the northward, a wide, flat ribbon of water green or blue according to the weather, and with muddy fringes more or less in evidence according to the tide. As a complement to the drift down the Orwell, the journey up the Deben to Woodbridge should certainly be undertaken. The course is narrower and the bordering country more flat, but the channel twists and winds interminably so that any one feature of the landscape is looked at before, behind and from at least one side ere it is finally disposed of.

A fussy steam ferry spans the mouth of the estuary, and if you like solitude you should follow the coast northward past Bawdsey and on to Shingle Street, that extraordinary spit of pebbles that provides at once a fascinating study for the geologist and an additional spice of adventure for daring yachtsmen who seek entry to Orwell Haven when the tide is not at its most favourable.

"At the west-end of Balsey Cliff" there once lay the busy town of Goseford. So completely has it vanished that even its name is forgotten. Shipden, off Cromer, is still remembered, and yet Shipden was no more important than this same Goseford, which in its day rivalled Ipswich as a seaport. But the sea has many secrets hereabouts, and probably you will not long be in the neighbourhood before some one has hinted at the "secret channel" which threads the shoal waters off Felixstowe.

Woodbridge is inseparably bound up with the name of Fitzgerald, and as we draw up towards the old quay we may reflect that on these very waters "Old Fitz" was wont to sail the *Scandal*. The boat was named, 'tis said, because scandal was the staple product of the town; without holding a brief for the town, it may be pointed out that an eminent poet who goes a-sailing clad in a silk hat and with a lady's feather boa twisted round his neck is, to say the least, inviting comment!

It was at Bredefield, north-west of Woodbridge, that Fitzgerald was born in 1809, and at Boulge, within a mile of Bredefield and also north-west of Woodbridge, that he was buried in 1883. He was a Cambridge man, and we know, from the testimony of Posh Fletcher, that he frequently went as far afield as Lowestoft; but, unlike Borrow, he was not a traveller. Born at Bredefield, he went to Woodbridge, and back to Boulge he was carried when he died. A short enough pilgrimage as mere mileage goes; but what journeys of the spirit were made from that plain-looking house in the Market Square of Woodbridge, or from the "suburb grange", where Tennyson "once tarried for a while" and which he remembered

when he addressed the pathetic greeting to "Old Fitz"—pathetic because Fitzgerald died ere *Tiresias* was published.

> Old Fitz, who from your suburb grange,
> Where once I tarried for a while
> Glance at the wheeling Orb of Change
> And greet it with a kindly smile;
> Whom yet I see as there you sit
> Beneath your sheltering garden tree,
> And watch your doves around you flit,
> And plant on shoulder, hand and knee. . . .

And so to the passage—

> But we old friends are still alive,
> And I am nearing seventy-four,
> While you have touched at seventy-five
> And so I send a birthday line of greeting.

A very different picture of Tennyson is conveyed in the reminiscence of his visit to the stables of the "Bull." Said Fitzgerald to the landlord of the "Bull," anent the visit, "You should be a proud man. He is the Poet Laureate."

"Dissay," was the dry response, "but he doesn't fare to know much about hosses!"

The "suburb grange" looks what it is—a place of memories. Of the breadth and depth of those memories Fitzgerald's biographers have written, but as we gaze on the little terrace before the house we may recall how Fitzgerald dubbed it his "quarter deck," and how he used to pace it to and fro; and how another extraordinary spirit, Charles Keene, of *Punch*, used also to pace the same deck vigorously playing the bagpipes. I can never quite bring myself to believe that Fitzgerald really enjoyed the pipes,

although he is said to have given Keene leave to play them in the house—provided he took "the drone" off!

But the greatest temple of literary memories in the Woodbridge district is a little thatched cottage—no bigger than a lodge it looks at first—at Boulge which became Fitzgerald's den. Here, amid a glorious "fug" of tobacco smoke, Fitzgerald would foregather with Crabbe, the vicar of Bredfield, Bernard Barton, the bank-clerk who so wished to be able to devote his whole life to writing poetry—his grave is in the Quaker burial ground at Woodbridge—and other more or less notable men. Fitzgerald's introduction to Omar he owed to an Ipswich man, G. B. Cowell, and Cowell forms an additional link between Fitzgerald and George Borrow, who also had a passion for translation.

Fitzgerald's grave is beside the little church at Boulge, and over it fragrance is shed by roses raised from seeds brought from the veritable grave at Naishapur of Omar. Who was Omar? Of Fitzgerald, who did so much more than translate Omar's Rubaiyat, we know much; of Omar so little that he is often regarded merely as Fitzgerald's stalking-horse. Omar was a very live man indeed about the time when William Rufus was disturbing England. He was an astronomer, and, as such, an important official at the court of the Mahmud of Ghuzni. But it is as a poet that he is known to fame, and by his collection of quatrains that his name will be remembered possibly even after that of Fitzgerald, who did so much to make it known, is no longer recalled.

But our business is with Woodbridge. Long ago it was a seaport of consequence, and although it is

no longer a port except for small coasting vessels the old town has a haunting air of seafaring traditions. Old tarred lofts and sheds brood over the waterway, and many a watercolour and etching has for its subject the curious old " gallows " which used to support the scales for weighing produce being brought into market. The town owes a considerable debt to one Thomas Seckford, whose tomb you may find in the church. Best known are the picturesque almshouses founded from the proceeds of some London property he left for charitable purposes ; he also gave much to the church, and his, too, is the Shire Hall, the lower part of which originally was probably used as a mart.

In the wooded valley of the Upper Deben is Wickham Market, once of note in this land of the South Folk, but now a very quiet little place, two long miles from its quiet little railway station. Without much that is tangible in the way of antiquity it yet retains an old-time air and boasts of an inn that changed its name in the reign of the seventh Henry and a Decorated church that is a remarkable specimen of that style among smaller parochial buildings.

Eastward from Woodbridge to the sea stretches a wide belt of heathland which has a certain fame among geologists on account of the beds exposed at Chillesford. Close to Chillesford is Butley, where among barns and haystacks you may find the venerable gateway which is almost the sole remnant of the Priory founded here in the twelfth century by Ranulph de Glanville. On the other side of Chillesford is Iken, long famous for a decoy in which countless wild ducks have been snared to an untimely doom. All over East Anglia you will find the word " decoy "

on the map, but the decoys have to some extent brought about their own fall, for although great numbers of wild duck visit the eastern counties during the winter, the present numbers are but a fraction of those formerly quoted. All the traps were built more or less on the same principle. The chief part was a long tapering tunnel of which the larger end might be twelve or even twenty feet in diameter. The tunnel was constructed by spreading a huge net, or a series of smaller nets, over a set of wooden hoops which gradually decreased in diameter from the entrance to the tunnel to its "exit"—a mere "stocking." By means of tame birds strangers were enticed into the mouth of this tunnel, and then were quickly scared to the farther end, whence they would be extracted by a neat-handed decoyman to make way for the next victim. Enormous bags used to be taken. Here and there the decoys survive, but in many places the name only is left.

Hastening on northward we come to little Snape Bridge, with a mill and a quay—a miniature seaport tucked away among the heather and gorse. Snape church stands at the cross-roads beyond, and here we turn right for Aldeburgh.

The popularity of golf has long been a conundrum for psychologists and other learned folk, but the matter should be clear enough to anyone who has driven from Snape towards Aldeburgh on a clear sunny morning, along a dark ribbon of road bordered by wide, smooth, billowy sheets of the greenest turf, bejewelled here and there by great flaming clumps of gorse. I cannot help thinking that such scenes do much to keep among the ranks of golfers those whose cards are invariably far above the hundred and who

yet battle manfully on in the hope that one day they will at least square with bogey!

Aldeburgh—the real typical Aldeburgh—reveals itself rather suddenly as we plunge through the modern suburb on the cliff. We note the church, the land suddenly falls before us, and a short steep run brings us into Aldeburgh proper. Notwithstanding invasion by cinema and motor bus, Aldeburgh keeps its air of sturdy—not to say stolid—antiquity. It has suffered much from the sea, but it does not repine. There is almost an air of bravado in the manner in which the old Moot Hall has been carefully left isolated on the front, as though daring the sea to come and fetch it; and this peculiarly zestful air is taken up by the houses fringing the little "Parade." They are not, as elsewhere, meticulously lined up in a long straight row, but stand some forward, some a little retired from the path—some even turning their back to the sea and offering instead a back garden to the parade. The whole reminds one strongly of a merry line of children, hand in hand, each daring the other to stand farther into the waves.

THE MOOT HALL, ALDEBURGH.

The charm of Aldeburgh is not easy to explain. As a town it is certainly not beautiful: is not even deserving of that over-used word "quaint;" but the beach, with its great capstans and its litter of boats and gear and its signpost indicating the cable to Holland, lingers in the memory with the quite plain yet oddly fascinating market place and the wide stretches of turf along by the Moot Hall.

Aldeburgh folk have changed since Crabbe's day, when he reported :

> Here joyless roam a wild, amphibious race,
> With sullen woe displayed in every face,
> Who far from civil arts and social fly,
> And scowl at strangers with suspicious eye.

But Crabbe was himself at the time rather a soured young man. One could hardly expect a poet to be otherwise when condemned to work in a warehouse alongside the quay at Slaughden !

His was a varied career. Apprenticed to an apothecary at Bury St. Edmunds who thought nothing of turning his pupil to give a hand with the plough ; then a few years with an apothecary at Woodbridge ; a few months of unhappy surgery experience in London, followed by an attempt to make his fortune as a doctor in Aldeburgh. Then, on the strength of three or four poems which had been published, he set out for London " determined to venture all "—on a capital of exactly sixty shillings ! At first it did not seem that his faith would be justified, and matters rapidly fell to such a state that at last he made an eloquent appeal to Burke—and some idea of his condition at the time can be gained by the confession made in later years that after handing the letter in at Burke's door he paced Westminster Bridge all night long, until daybreak.

Burke quickly proved himself the friend in need, introduced Crabbe to various influential men and was instrumental in securing for him the curacy of Aldeburgh.

While working at Woodbridge he had fallen in love with " Mira," whom he met at her uncle's hall of

Barham or at her home at Beccles, and at Beccles he was married in 1783.

In *The Borough* and other poems Crabbe has shown how carefully he had observed the features of the place in which his youth had been spent—for instance his description of the neighbouring marshlands :

> Here the dwarf sallows creep, the septfoil harsh
> And the soft slimy mallow of the marsh.
> Low on the sea the distant billows sound.
> No hedge, no tree conceals the glowing sun ;
> Birds, save a wat'ry tribe, the district shun,
> Nor chirp among the reeds, where bitter waters run.

Or listen again to his notes on a wintry scene—

> High o'er the restless deep, above the reach
> Of gunner's hope, vast flights of wild duck stretch
> Far as the eye can glance on either side,
> In a broad space and level line they glide ;
> All in their wedge-like figures from the North,
> Day after day, flight after flight go forth.

It is inevitable that an unrecognized poet, tied by circumstances to this out-of-the-way corner of the land, should envy the birds their freedom ; but that Crabbe could appreciate the heathlands in the neighbourhood is shown well in the following lines from *The Lover's Journey*, a poem descriptive of the many trips he made to Woodbridge and Beccles to see his beloved Mira :

> First o'er a barren heath, beside the coast,
> Orlando rode, and joy began to boast.
> " This neat low gorse," said he, " with golden bloom
> Delights each sense, is beauty, is perfume ;
> And this gay ling, with all its purple flowers,
> A man of leisure might admire for hours.

This green-fringed cup-moss has a scarlet tip
That yields to nothing but my Mira's lip;
And then how fine this herbage! Men may say
A heath is barren: nothing is so gay."

The house in which Crabbe was born has long disappeared, but the church at Aldeburgh contains his bust and at the east end of the church are the graves of his parents.

Whether you like or dislike marshes is to some extent a matter of temperament, but to a greater extent a matter of weather. On a cold rainy day of winter, one can sympathize with Fitzgerald's groan "The melancholy of Slaughden, with the same sloops sticking sidelong in the mud as sixty years ago!"

On a good day, when the cloud-battalions march along the horizon and rippling bluey-green waters fill every creek and masts are waving to and fro and the wavelets slap against a hundred hulls, then Slaughden is a very good place indeed, and as one is carried upstream by the tide the words of another Suffolk poet—James Bird—come to mind:

There stands a vale beside the rolling sea;
Hail, Slaughden, hail! my theme belongs to thee;
Thy boundless prospect charms the wand'ring eye,
The rising waves that kiss the azure sky,
The white sail shining from some distant skiff,
The level beach, the rough aspiring cliff,
The castle's mouldering wall, the silent wood,
The silver face of Alde's meandering flood.

The castle whose "mouldering wall" attracted Bird's notice was that of Orford. At one time Orford was a thriving town, with much business on and about the sea; now it is one of the quietest imaginable

corners of Suffolk and except when the motor has brought a load of visitors in from a neighbouring resort you may stand in the churchyard and look down the little street to the Pier and hear scarcely a sound, see scarcely a soul. Yet it is a cheery little place, and one in which you will find excellent company should you select it for a short sojourn. The church tower is in a state of semi-ruin that is somehow oddly attractive and when seen from certain angles is strongly reminiscent of a certain continental cathedral which for the life of me I cannot name; at the east end of the church a double range of Norman pillars and arches project alone into the churchyard—the bare bones of the chancel.

ORFORD CASTLE.

Across the little *place*—or, since it is in Suffolk, we must call it, the square, though it isn't—frowns the great keep of the Castle that has kept watch and ward over Orford since Norman times. Most impressive is the manner in which this great block of masonry rises nigh a hundred feet from its steep-sided mound, and although it no longer serves its original purpose it does perform a very useful function, since with the church tower it forms a valuable landmark for mariners making their way among the shoals of the adjacent shore.

One can hardly leave Orford without reference to the "Wild Man" who created such a stir here a

century or two ago. He was an amphibious creature—a kind of merman, but with none of the traditional charm of those folk—and the fishermen of Orford had little difficulty in catching him in their nets and in carrying him up to the Castle, where he promptly landed the Governor in a quandary. He could speak no intelligible tongue, he refused to wear the clothes put before him, and altogether it is to be feared that the poor creature did not enjoy his stay at Orford Castle. As evidence of which it may be added that he attempted to escape back to the sea, only to be recaptured, but eventually he made good his escape and was seen at Orford no more. No more in the form of the merman, at any rate, though there are those who insist on identifying him with a mysterious form—" the Black Shuck "—which in the form of a dog haunts East Anglia, spreading terror and often leaving death in his trail. So strong is the belief in the Black Shuck in some quarters, that a deliberate attempt to court his company was made a short time back, though the results seem to a possibly biassed mind to be quite equivocal and by no means evidence that the apparition is disconnected with a form of hysteria.

In one respect at least Orford is well up with the times, for one's musings on the Wild Man and on the Bigods and other past governors of the castle are shattered on encountering a warning against trespassing in certain areas on the sea-marshes during certain hours when the neighbouring airmen practice bombing !

The heathlands around Orford and over towards Woodbridge and Iken are very fine : wide undulating spreads of gorse and bracken broken by clumps of

birches and oaks, beyond which the sea gleams blue in the sunlight and the passing shipping appears as a procession of toys.

Geologists will be interested in the neighbourhood of Chillesford, a name well known from its connection with the fossiliferous beds exposed in the vicinity.

This is a changing coast, and even the least geological tourist can hardly fail to notice the evidence of mutability. In an interesting communication to the Geologists' Association Mr. J. A. Steers wrote of it : " This is part of the drowned coast of East Anglia, and it possesses features quite typical of such an area. For the most part cliffs are absent, but, where they do occur, as at Thorpeness and Bawdsey, they are low and composed of soft and relatively incoherent material which is powerless against the attacks of the sea.

" Soon after the last movement of a general nature—the Neolithic subsidence—to affect this part of the coast, the Suffolk shore must have presented a very diversified appearance. Long narrow arms of the sea penetrated far into the land, and these arms were separated by peninsulas of the soft country rock. These peninsulas were soon cut back and the detritus thus formed—and possibly also material from more distant sources—was swept along the coast in a southerly direction, with the prevailing drift along the East Coast of England, and deposited as spits and bars in the quiet waters at the mouth of the estuaries. In this way the streams were diverted. The small streams were quite unable to maintain an outlet, and were completely dammed back in course of time. Such has been the fate of the small Hundred river between Thorpe and Aldeburgh, though

the complete obstruction of its mouth seems to have been delayed until the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries.

"The larger streams were able to maintain outlets which were, in general, shifted southward by the spits and bars. At certain periods, doubtless, these spits were cut through, either by the attack or by pounding back of the river water due to south-east winds or other causes. At the present time the thin distal end of the Alde spit is subject to great fluctuations of this nature. . . . Thus the gradual wearing back of the peninsulas and headlands and the formation of spits and bars led to the smoothing out of the coast-line to its present form."

Thorpe Ness, to which we look north from Aldeburgh, is "a small sand and shingle headland which is suffering erosion on its northern face and accretion on its southern side. The accretion to the north of Thorpe reaches, but with ever lessening effect, to Aldeburgh Coastguard Station. This marks the approximate place where accretion gives place to erosion. A parallel case is found at Southwold. This town lies in the lee of Covehithe Ness, and its beach progrades in inverse proportion to the retrograding of the Ness itself. But here conditions are rather different owing to various protective works at Southwold."

Notwithstanding its geological heritage, Thorpeness manages to attract a very light-hearted set of holiday makers—though possibly their spirits are unconsciously affected by the welcome circumstances that here at least old England is gaining ground. It has need to. Enormous stretches of land have been engulfed between Orford and Lowestoft. Sizewell,

now merely a hamlet, was formerly a much larger place, while the disappearance of Dunwich is part of our national history to which we shall return on a later page. For the moment we are attracted inland from Thorpe to Leiston for the sake of the remains of the Præmonstratensian abbey which was built here in the twelfth century by that same Robert de Glanville who was responsible for Butley Priory, over beyond the Alde. The remains have been incorporated into a farm.

Saxmundham, long a quiet little town chiefly known as the junction of the Aldeburgh railway with the main line, is now very much alive in the summer months, when motors in an unending stream pour through, and you will doubtless be glad when you are safely beyond the crossing and off westward for Framlingham. The really artistic direction from which to approach Framlingham, however, is from the west; since coming in that direction you see first of all the venerable Castle, with the town beside it. Coming from the east the town is first to appear, huddled together in the bottom of its valley.

But as you ride eastward from the pretty little village of Earl Soham, Framlingham is suddenly revealed, clustering in the narrow valley of the upper Alde, and very fine the Castle looks as it stands against the farther cliff. It is a truly venerable pile, of a design more commonly met in toy-shops than in real life. From a distance it still appears to be complete, but much of it has been pulled down. The sturdy little towers still hold their proud heads aloft, however, as if to disprove the contention of the moulded brick chimneys that the Castle was at any time anything but a fortress.

The Castle we now see was built for the most part in the time of the first Edward, but the Duke of Norfolk—he who as Earl of Surrey had defeated James IV at Flodden Field—added the main gateway and other features. Formerly the strength of the position was increased by damming the river to make a broad lake before the Castle, access to which was gained by a causeway commanded by a barbican.

This was not the first castle to occupy the site, however, and an allusion to its predecessors is contained in some lines by Bird—

> Heir of antiquity! Fair castled town,
> Rare spot of beauty, grandeur and renown,
> Seat of East Anglian kings, proud child of fame,
> Hallowed by time, illustrious Framlinghame.

"Framlinghame's" traditions are less of East Anglian kings than of the proud family of Howard, several members of which are commemorated by stately monuments in Framlingham Church. The Castle has also associations with Sir Thomas Erpingham, whom we shall meet again at Norwich; and it was for a brief period the retreat of Mary, what time the "Janeites" of her unhappy day held the upper hand.

The reference to Janeites reminds one that Framingham also has connections with literature, one of the monuments in the church commemorating that Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, who was the originator of blank verse, and who made, among other literary efforts, a very creditable translation of the *Æneid* and earned from Pope the tribute—

> Matchless his pen, victorious was his lance—
> Bold in the lists, and graceful in the dance.

For many years his body—he was executed on Tower Hill on a trumped-up charge of treason—lay in the church of All Hallows, Barking, but it was brought to Framlingham by his son, who only escaped a similar fate on Tower Hill by the timely death of Henry VIII.

There is extant a wonderful description of the funeral ceremonies of the second Duke of Norfolk, who died in 1524. It is far too long to quote in full, but certain passages are too colourful to be passed by completely, and I cannot refrain from including the description of the procession which set out from Framlingham for Thetford, and certain other passages relating to the burial in Thetford Priory. The procession, rightly described as "very magnificent", was made up as follows. "First went three coaches of friars, then the minister of the church, followed by his chaplain, then the standard, followed by knights, esquires, gentlemen of the household, treasurer and comptroller, with their staves in their hands and their horses trapped; then his banner, borne by Sir Edward Bray, Knight, and his coat of arms by Carlisle herald, the helmet and crest by Windsor herald, the target of his arms by Clarenceux king of arms, and the coat of arms which was to be offered borne by Garter king of arms, all of whom rode in their liveries of black, their hoods on their heads, their horses trapped and on every one of them four escutcheons of his arms. . . .

"Then came the chariot wherein the noble corpse lay, followed by the chief mourner alone, and in a space behind him the other mourners, two and two, rode together in their long gowns of black cloth; next after them followed the chamberlain with his staff, then the master of the horse, leading a sumpter

horse, trapped in fine cloth of gold, garnished with his escutcheon and arms, then other lords, knights and gentlemen to the number of nine hundred."

Not without reason has Dunwich been called " the most tragic place on the East Coast." Here there is not merely loss of a few acres of land, but the loss of all that intricate texture that we call a town, together with its traditions, its memorials and its architectural glories. In the thirteenth century Dunwich was a port worthy of consideration. It maintained " eleven ships of war, sixteen fair ships, twenty barks or trading vessels to the North Sea, Iceland, etc., and two dozen small boats for the home fishery." It was a place of worth, and so amply defended that Robert Earl of Leicester found that " the strength thereof was fear and terror unto him to behold." Even allowing something for a little pardonable licence, it would seem that the defences of Dunwich were at any rate of some pretensions, such as would form adequate protection (according to the lights of those days) to a town boasting at least a dozen churches, possibly twice that number, and sundry monastic establishments.

Where now the waves lazily tumble shoreward once ebbed and flowed the busy tide of human affairs—buying and selling, fighting, love-making, the rattle of wheels over cobbles and the voices of children at play. Winchelsea alone can supply a parallel around our shores ; but Winchelsea was rebuilt : its traditions survive as a fragrant memory. Dunwich has gradually sunk and slithered down the soft cliff into oblivion.

It is noteworthy that the first great inundation here took place in the fourteenth century, that period when so many coastal changes appeared around our shores. There may, of course, have been great storms

ere this, but in 1328 a single storm accounted for over four hundred houses at Dunwich as well as the harbour. New defences were hastily reared with what funds could be amassed, only to fall to the next great storm, which would in all probability take yet another bite of the town. The loss of the harbour would be a deadly blow at the town's prosperity, and Dunwich never seems to have recovered fully from that first loss, albeit it still returned two members to Parliament to within the last hundred years! But, then, so did many another "rotten" borough.

So Dunwich is a sad little place to-day for all who cannot resist looking into the past; yet it is a pretty spot, with broad stretches of heather, gorse and bracken. But walking along the shore one is haunted by Swinburne's line:

> Here, where the earth is dense with dead men's bones.

The town has a more cheerful link with literature in the person of that Master Daye, who printed books of Latimer, Parker and Foxe, including the "Martyrs." He was born at Dunwich, and the title-page on one of his books tells us that he lived "Over Aldersgate, beneath St. Martin's, and are to be sold at his longe shop, at the north-west dore of Saint Pauls"—not a hundred yards from the House whence this book is issued. But Dunwich is as completely wiped out as Aldersgate and the "longe shoppe at the north-west dore of Saint Pauls."

Here we are in touch with the earliest movement towards Christianity in East Anglia. It was in the first half of the seventh century—Augustine of Canterbury had been dead only a few years—when Felix of Burgundy was invited to come and convert the pagan

East Anglians. He landed, some say, at Felixstowe —the event being commemorated in the name—and at Dunwich he fixed his see. The good work prospered so that after only forty years it became necessary to divide the diocese. The religious life of the northern part of East Anglia was henceforth directed from Elmham, until it was transferred, via Thetford, to Norwich, as related on another page, but Dunwich remained a Cathedral town for some four hundred years. In view of its long and honourable association with Christianity, it is small wonder that the place was celebrated for its many and fine churches, and it is perhaps fitting that among the very last portions of the old town to disappear should have been the church of All Souls.

It would be interesting to speculate on the present condition of Dunwich had the sea left it intact, for its prosperity was in no small measure wrapped up in its harbour. Vessels of all kinds came and went, and from time to time it had the doubtful satisfaction of acquiescing in the King's demand for ships, in the days when there was no regular navy and a fleet was recruited by the simple process of requisitioning suitable vessels from the handiest ports.

> To Dunwich, Sould [1] and Walberswick
> We pass in at a lousy creek.

The reluctance of the Yare to meet the sea at Yarmouth has had its counterpart in the inability of the Blyth to find a permanent outlet. For centuries its estuary formed the harbour which was the mainstay of the prosperity of Dunwich; with the departure of the river the doom of a one-time busy town was

[1] Sould = Southwold.

sealed. Edward II did what he could by ordering that "all goods, merchandizes and fish imported at the New haven" (which was along towards Walberswick) should be "put to sale nowhere but at the ancient market places in Dunwich, on forfeiture of goods and merchandizes so vended;" but Dunwich steadily declined in importance and it was a somnolent place that fell to the waves. The New Haven of Edward II's time was followed by several others. Piers and dredgers keep the present channel open, and one of the delights of Southwold is its harbour, with its picturesque sheds and stores and its boats alternately resting on the mud and receiving the joyous slappings of the wavelets. "Harbour" is perhaps a somewhat ambitious word to-day, though the haven is used by a number of fishing and coasting vessels—and yachtsmen know it well; but it is shrunk since the days when it was regarded as a true successor to the port of Dunwich. Gardner tells us that the "illustrious benefices" of Henry VII—a charter and other privileges—gave great encouragement to trade and navigation, whereof "the Fishery was no small part, being supported by merchants who annually fitted out many barks and vessels"—tradition says upwards of fifty—"for cod fish, to the North Sea, Iceland, Farra and Westmona and perhaps farther;" and he added that there was a plot in Southwold significantly known as The Blubber-ground.

Long ago it was noted that Southwold was an island, and doubtless before modern drainage was adopted the insularity was more pronounced—it cannot be deemed an outstanding feature to-day. A small stream, known as the Buss Creek, flows from the Blyth right round the rising ground on which the town is

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built. The name of the creek I take to be an interesting reminiscence of the light sailing boats, known as busses, which presumably used the creek to a considerable extent.

The charm of modern Southwold is not readily expressed. It has a flavour all its own, a blend of mellow memories of its days as a seaport; of wide outlooks over sea or over the low-lying pasture lands to the west, coupled with the emotions aroused by one of the very finest churches in Suffolk and the unique experience, for the townsman at least, of living in the same street as a lighthouse. And there are the sands and the low cliffs, and the glories of sniffing in the rich compound of tar, fish, mud and the salt sea air which encompasses the riverside.

The Stocks and South Porch, Southwold.

Not idly is Southwold church classified among the very finest in Suffolk. It was erected in the early-Perpendicular period, and unlike many other churches it had the advantage of being completed without undue delay, a circumstance we have to thank for the uniformity of the architecture. No chancel arch separates nave from chancel, and the clerestory of eighteen bays extends in an unbroken range from east to west. Externally this range of windows is very striking, and the note is taken up and emphasized in a deeper key by the larger windows of the aisles. There is much excellent flint-work, notably the panelling at the east end, and the stern rectangularity of the western tower is admirably off-set by the graceful

little flèche which rises midway along the roof of the church. Within, the charm of perfect regularity persists, the arcades of the nave leading the eye to the beautiful east window. Here, as elsewhere in East Anglia, the heavy hand of Dowsing made itself unpleasant, but in Southwold church at least some of the effects of his visit have been obliterated, since the mutilated roof corbels have been carefully restored, and enough of the rood screen was left unimpaired to command unstinted admiration.

All writers on Southwold and Dunwich owe a debt to Thomas Gardner, who in his *History* recorded much that is interesting and instructive. He married twice, and in the graveyard of Southwold church you may find the grave of Rachel the first wife, who died March, 1729, and of Rachel their daughter, who died in the same year.

> Virtue crowned during life
> Both the daughter and the wife—

so runs the inscription on their tomb, while on the gravestone of Gardner's second wife, Mary, who died in 1759, are the lines:

> Honour ever did attend
> Her just dealings to the end.

Gardner survived both these ladies, and when at last his turn came and they laid him to rest in 1769 his stone was inscribed:

> Between Honour and Virtue here doth lie
> The remains of old antiquity.

Close at hand lies another historian, one better

known since she painted a wider canvas. Agnes Strickland, whose writings concerning the Queens of England made her famous, was born at Reydon Hall, and for some years before her death she lived at Southwold. In the churchyard she sleeps, not far from her sister Jane.

The guns which gave name to Gun Hill—Southwold's favourite promenading place—came here as trophies from Prestonpans, and though they contrive at times to frown quite fiercely at passing shipping they are hardly likely to be taken very seriously. Southwold, nevertheless, has smelt powder. Formerly the land extended farther out to sea to the northward of the town and there was formed Southwold Bay, or Sole Bay, and here in 1672 was waged a hot and important contest between the Dutch under De Ruyter and the English under the Earl of Sandwich. The history books give the cold facts and weigh the historical consequences of the fight ; here let us read an amusing ballad written by one who watched the battle from the shore :

One day as I was sitting still
Upon the side of Dunwich hill,
  And looking on the ocean,
By chance I saw De Ruyter's fleet
With Royal James's squadron meet,
In sooth it was a noble treat
    To see that brave commotion.

I cannot stay to name the names
Of all the ships that fought with James,
  Their number or their tonnage ;
But this I saw, the noble host
Right gallantly did take its post,
And covered all the hollow coast
  From Walberswick to Dunwich.

The French who should have joined the Duke
Full far astern did lag and look,
  Although their hulls were lighter;
But nobly faced the Duke of York,
Though some may wink and some may talk,
Right stoutly did his vessel stalk
  To buffet with De Ruyter.

Well might you hear their guns, I guess,
From Sizewell Gap to Easton Ness,
  The show was rare and sightly;
They battered without let or stay
Until the evening of that day.
'Twas then the Dutchmen ran away,
  The Duke had beat them tightly.

Of all the battles gained at sea,
This was the rarest victory
  Since Philip's grand Armada.
I will not name the rebel Blake,
He fought for Roundhead Cromwell's sake
And yet was forced three days to take
  To quell the Dutch bravado.

So now we've seen them take to flight
This way and that, where'er they might,
  To windward or to leeward.
Here's to King Charles and here's to James
And here's to all the captains' names;
And here's to all the Suffolk dames,
  And here's the house of Stuart.

The ingenuity of the writer in rhyming Stuart with leeward (or loo'ard) is such that it seems unnecessary to add a warning against acceptance of the ballad as a quite literal account of what happened. Not inopportunely we may read a letter from the Earl of Arlington to the Duke of Lauderdale with reference to this same battle:

"Considering the advantage the enemy took uppon

us wee are well come off, and although his Rl H had minde enough to have engaged the enemy on Woodensday and had certainly done it if a fogge had not miraculously fallen as to prevent it, yet I must confess to yr Gce considering all circumstances I am glad we are parted as we are for the present. The Dutch have suffered infinitely more than wee it is certaine; and yet they will not only dissemble it better as to point of reputation, but will be able to appeare at sea againe much sooner than wee can, for they have many ships ready in Hollande which they will mann with the shattered ones they carry in now, and capour likewise in that point and have their people of their side more than we shall. His R.H. tells ye King he will lye in Sole Bay againe to refit and take in provisions but his Maty thinking he may doe it with much more dispatch and security at ye buoy of ye Nore hath sent my lord Clifford to persuade him to it. Within twenty four houres wee shall know how he succeeds. The condition ye fleete shall be found in will decide ye question, which by that time will be treuly proven with which his R H hath promised also a true relation of this confused action by that we shall also know what grounde there hath been for ye severe censures for the behaviour of the french. Ye King hath this day spoken to ye Ambassadr to see how he can bring to passe that ye 6 or 8 french men of warre plying at ye channels mouth for ye security of their merchants may be sent hither to strengthen our fleete wth wch he hath charged himself."

A very jolly excursion with favourable tide and breeze is up the tortuous Blyth from Southwold to Blythburgh, a place which certainly had an importance in Roman days even if the Romans were not the

founders of the settlement. But its importance did not end with the departure of the Legions, and on the evidence of its church alone it must have been a very prosperous place in the fifteenth century. Since then, however, the town has almost entirely disappeared—one might almost incline to the belief that it realized its imminent decadence and erected the church as a memorial, to those who were to come after, of what Blythburgh had been. Like Dunwich, the town was bound up with the vagaries of the Blyth. Unlike Dunwich, it was less affected by the position of the estuary than by the navigable depth of the waterway, but as years rolled on and ships became larger, and all the time the river tended to become shallower, it became more and more evident that Blythburgh's days as a port were over.

The church has more than a family likeness to that of Southwold, but, restoration notwithstanding, it retains a pathetic air of desolation. Yet through the evident signs of decay shines the glory of its unity of design, from east to west unbroken ranges of Perpendicular windows in clerestory and aisle striking a note of grandeur that rises superior to the forlornness of the situation.

If you would travel from Southwold to Blythburgh by road it would be necessary to make use of the ferry across the Blyth at Walberswick, from which a third church tower is prominent. Walberswick church, however, has fallen to decay, and only the tower and part of the south aisle are now usable for service. Here and there delicate tracery is outlined high above the sky, and heavy buttresses cling to solitary scraps of wall as though for support lest they, too, should tumble to the ground, but in its prime Walberswick

church can have fallen little short of its neighbours at Southwold or Blythburgh in point of architectural beauty.

A most remarkable discovery was made at Wenhaston in the closing years of the last century. For a long time comment had been busy against a great whitewashed partition which stood between the nave and chancel of Wenhaston church, and finally in the nineties it was decided to remove the obstruction, which was accordingly done. The partition was cast aside with other rubbish in the churchyard and there it lay neglected for some time. So little was thought of it that no precautions were taken to protect it against rain, and but for a heavy storm it is possible that the whole might have been burnt. As it was, rain did fall, and the vicar was astonished to find that where the rain had dissolved the whitewash there was revealed some quite good colouring. Realizing the importance of this discovery he had the whole partition carefully cleansed and was rewarded with the sight of a splendid "Doom" or painting of the Last Judgment. It was a favourite device in pre-Reformation days, and many a chancel arch was so decorated, but except where whitewash was hastily applied to hide the "superstitious" painting—and so preserve it for posterity—most of the Dooms have vanished. The whole conception, no less than the execution, of the Wenhaston painting, is interesting in the extreme. Here is the mediaeval conception of Heaven—a large house with windows, and doors guarded by custodian angels. St. Michael is depicted weighing the soul of a man who seems likely to gain admittance to the Heavenly mansion, since the scales are just turning in his favour; which is as well, for close at hand waits

a fiery dragon into whose capacious mouth demons armed with prongs propel those whose good deeds have *not* outweighed their errors when submitted to the scales of the archangel.

The whole design is packed with interesting details, and quite a good way of filling a wet morning or afternoon is to run into Wenhaston and spend an hour examining this remarkable painting. Those interested in mediaeval paintings should take the opportunity of comparing these at Wenhaston with those recently discovered at Haxne.

Halesworth, like Saxmundham, is principally of importance to visitors as the junction of the main line with the branch to the coast. A beautifully primitive line connects it with Southwold, and if there is one thing which persuades folk to go to Southwold by rail rather than by motor it is the ride on this glorified tramway, as it chuggs along across fields and between hedges that hardly leave space for the train. No doubt one day this line will be " brought up to date " in the hateful way of these times. Should Southwold attain the dimensions of a Brighton or Bournemouth there might be justification for such a change, but so long as it remains more or less as big as it is, and the railway is able to cope with all the traffic, the retention of this Victorian line is earnestly to be desired. One can ride on a modern electric railway—and many of us do—almost every day of our working lives ; on holiday it is pleasant to take things in a more leisurely fashion. So you will probably make at least one trip from Southwold to Halesworth by railway, and while awaiting the return train you may wander into Halesworth church, which suffers by comparison with those at Southwold and Blythburgh but is an attractive

building judged on its own merits. There are some good brasses, and the place has a further interest from its associations with Keble, who stayed frequently at the rectory and here wrote portions of *The Christian Year*.

Back to the coast by the little narrow-gauge railway, and then we are free to set out on foot or by car to explore the lonely piece of country between Southwold and Lowestoft. It is a land from which much has been filched by the sea, and a very curious formation is found at Easton where, instead of flowing into the ocean, the waters of the little river collect in a broad over half a mile long. It is by no means an unpicturesque spot, but the proximity of sea and broad is very remarkable. At one time the parish of Easton stretched far to the east, and provided a point of land that held the proud position of "Easternmost England" that is now claimed by Lowestoft Ness, but Easton Bavent has been literally "wiped off the map," and one wonders how far distant is the day when the sea will filch the seaward shore of Easton Broad and convert it into a little cove washed by the salt waters of the North Sea.

A somewhat similar problem offers at Benacre Broad, a mile or two farther north, but here the broad is more distant from the shore.

From Reydon we look across to the well-wooded park of Henham, long famed for an oak in which a member of the Rous family successfully hid from the Roundheads who sought him out. Benacre Hall is a modern building of no great note, but the old hall known to Charles Brandon, the famous Duke of Suffolk, and subsequently to the Rous family, seems to have been a very lovable place. But it fell a victim to fire some 160 years ago.

From Wrentham we may get across to the sea at Covehithe, another of the stricken towns of this coast. The principal remain of its former prosperity is the church, the ruins of which moved Agnes Strickland to write :

On gray Covehithe mild eve has cast
A soft and mellow ray,
But o'er its glories time has passed
With dark destroying sway.

All roofless, now, the stately pile
And rent the arches tall ;
Through which with bright departing smile
The western sunbeams fall.

The ivy wreaths unheeded twine
In wild profusion there,
And oft with summer's flowers combine
To crown the oriel fair.

The choir is hushed, and silent now
The organ's thrilling sigh,
Yet swelleth ever from many a bow
The linnets' lullaby.

The grass-grown aisle, all green and lone,
No musing footsteps tread,
And even o'er the altar stone
The mantling brambles spread.

Tradition's voice forgets to tell
Whose ashes sleep below,
And fancy here unchecked may swell
And bid the story flow.

In view of the fact that Agnes Strickland, historian of England's queens, was born at Reydon, further interest attaches to Covehithe as the birthplace of John Bale, Bishop of Ossory in Ireland, who wrote, among other works, the first English literary history.

Kessingland and Pakefield are fast becoming suburbs

of Lowestoft, their splendid sands attracting large numbers of holiday makers for whom the inevitable bungalow is being built perilously near the cliff top in many places. This stretch of shore is one of those along which the marram has been planted as a measure of protection against the oncoming sea, and apparently it is regarded with approbation, though here and there are houses of which only one half remains, yawning over the cliff, the other half—or what of it has not been considered worth removing—lying below, just a shapeless mass of bricks and stones. Marram grass looks a futile enough barricade against the waves, but it is of peculiar value in binding the sand, which otherwise would be a prey not only to the waves but to the wind also. Examining a marram blade you will find it almost U-shape in section, and it is held that the sand being blown along by the wind and striking into the concave side of a marram stalk is there trapped, slides to the ground, and so builds up a little mound out of which the marram grows more sturdily than ever. Below ground the influence of marram is hardly less valuable, as you may realize if you try to dig up a root. You will have a long task, probably, for the average length of root is considerably more than twenty feet and a quite common root is forty feet in length. A bed of marram therefore argues a thick network of roots intertwined among the sand below, and thus above and below the surface marram has come to be accounted one of the most simply installed and the most efficient methods of protection against erosion along sandy coasts.

Lowestoft we leave for a subsequent chapter. Now we make our way inland past a number of villages with churches of some interest. Gisleham, for instance,

has a typical round flint tower, but for a really fine church tower you should continue to Beccles, alongside the Waveney.

It is rather surprising to learn that the prosperity of this attractive town formerly depended upon the herring fishery, but at a time when the estuary of the Waveney was much wider than at present—the point is discussed again in connection with the rise of Great Yarmouth—Beccles was a port of considerable worth. It has even been argued that the massive tower of the church was built separately owing to fears of subsidence due to the encroachments of the waves.

The church has always been a prominent feature of the town, and efforts that are ingenious if not entirely convincing have been made to derive the name from *Beata Ecclesia*. The manor of Beccles was granted by Edwy to the monastery of St. Edmund's in 960, and the crown and arrows of that monastery still figure on the grand old south porch of the church. This porch is one of the finest in the county, and in its day—painted, gilded and encrusted with lapis lazuli—must have been magnificent, and in itself a sign of the worth of the herring industry. To-day the fishery has been replaced by printing, and you may have the happy experience of falling in with one of those indispensable yet seldom heard-of members of the profession—the printer's "reader": men often of most modest demeanour yet possessed of a truly enviable fund of miscellaneous knowledge.

Beccles has the distinction of having provided the first nonconformist chapel in the district, a noteworthy event commemorated in a document headed "The sixth day of ye fifth month, commonly called July, 1652: the names of such persons whoe have covenanted

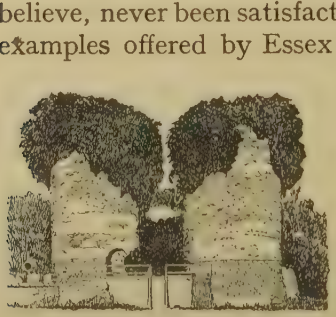
together to walk in ye wayes of Christ according to Gospel Order, with an account of such matters as have occurred in ye church att Beckles."

Past pretty little Geldeston—not at all perturbed, apparently, by the various ghosts and wraiths which are reputed to haunt it—we follow the Waveney towards the thriving town of Bungay, well placed above the river and commanding good views of the countryside around.

If we journey from Beccles to Bungay by road it is worth deviating to pay a visit to Barsham, associated with the Suckling family. The Rev. Alfred Suckling, the county historian, was for many years rector of Barsham, and at the rectory there was born in 1725 a baby girl who was named Catherine, and who in later years married a clergyman named Nelson to whom in due course she presented a son whom they christened Horatio. Of the manner in which Horatio happened to take to the sea we shall have something to recall when we come to Burnham Thorpe, where he was born. Another member of the Suckling family—Sir John, the poet—possessed the property for some time. He was not merely poet, by the way, but a man of action as well. He fought on the Continent for some years before he became one of the chief wits at the court of Charles I, and in 1639 he raised a troop of horse to aid the king against the Scots. Nevertheless his fame rests chiefly on his lyrics, foremost among them " Why so pale and wan, fond lover ? "

Strange scenes were witnessed in the church of Barsham in the fourteenth century, when Sir John Atte Tye was buried, four dozens of wine being drunk over his grave before it was closed ! This custom, known as " drinking for the soul " of the departed, was at one

time common enough, and here and there in old wills we find instructions to executors to arrange for such a "wake." Nowadays the ceremonial drinking of wine has become so obsolete a fashion that the Barsham incident seems gruesome in the extreme. Sir John Atte Tye is commemorated by a good brass in the church. "Tye," by the way, though common enough in Essex, is not often encountered beyond the confines of that county. The meaning of the word has, I believe, never been satisfactorily established, for all the examples offered by Essex place-names; but opinion leans towards a connection with cross-roads, or the meeting of tracks. Which opens up interesting speculations concerning that Sir John Atte Tye who introduced us to this digression.



BUNGAY CASTLE.

Bungay has a long history, but hardly any part of the present town dates from earlier than the seventeenth century, for in 1618 the place was visited by a terrible fire which practically wiped it out. St. Mary's Church and a charming old building close to it were almost the only structures to come through the flames, the origin of which is darkly hinted at in the local saying, applied to any evil-doer, "as big a rogue as burnt Bungay." St. Mary's originally formed the church of a Benedictine priory founded in the twelfth century by the widow of Roger Bigod. Little of the castle is left now, but in Stephen's reign Bungay castle was so strongly fortified that the Hugh Bigod of that generation is reported by Holinshed to have boasted:

"Were I in my castle of Bungay,
Upon the waters of Waveney,
I would ne set a button by the king of Cockneye."

The boast is unconfirmed, except by tradition, but it is certainly a "coincidence" that the castle was dismantled by the orders of Henry II, though it was rebuilt in Edward I's time. However, the boast and one version of the subsequent proceedings have long passed into ballad form:—

The King has sent for Bigod bold,
In Essex, whereat he lay;
But Bigod laughed at the Poursuivant
And stoutly thus did say:
"Were I in my castle of Bungaye,
Upon the river of Waveney,
I would ne care for the king of Cockneye."

Hugh Bigod was lord of Bungay's tower,
And a merry lord was he;
So away he rode on his berry-black steed
And sung with licence and glee—
"Were I in my castle of Bungay,
Upon the river of Waveney,
I would ne care for the king of Cockneye."

At Ipswich they laughed to see how he sped,
And at Ufford they stared, I wis:
But at merry Saxmundham they heard his song,
And the song he sung was this:
"Were I in my castle of Bungay,
Upon the river of Waveney,
I would ne care for the king of Cockneye."

The Baily he rode and the Baily he ran
To catch the gallant Lord Hugh,
But for every mile the Baily rode
The Earl he rode more than two,
Crying "Were I in my castle of Bungaye,
Upon the river of Waveney
I would ne care for the King of Cockneye."

When the Baily had ridden to Bramfield oak,
Sir Hugh was at Ilkshall bower;
When the Baily had ridden to Halesworth cross
He was singing in Bungay tower,
"Now that I am in my castle of Bungay,
Upon the river of Waveney,
I do not care for the King of Cockneye."

When the news was brought to London town
How Sir Bigod did jest and sing.
"Say you to Sir Hugh of Norfolk,"
Said Henry our English king,
"Though you be in your castle of Bungay
Upon the river of Waveney,
I'll make you care for the king of Cockneye."

King Henry he marshalled his merry men all
And through Suffolk they marched with speed,
And they marched to Lord Bigod's castle wall
And knocked at his gate, I rede;
"Sir Hugh of the Castle of Bungay,
Upon the river of Waveney,
Come, doff your hat to the king, your lord!"

Sir Hugh Bigod, so stout and brave,
When he heard the King thus say
He trembled and shook like a May-mawther
And he wished himself away.
"Were I out of my Castle of Bungay
And beyond the river of Waveney
I would ne care for the King of Cockneye."

Sir Hugh took three score bags of gold
And flung them over the wall,
Saying "Go your ways in the Devil's name,
Yourself and your merry men all!"
But leave me my castle of Bungay
Upon the river of Waveney
And I'll pay my shot to the king of Cockneye."

Still following the Waveney upwards from Bungay

we come to the village of Hoxne, an intriguing name which is pronounced "Hoxon." The place has long been associated with the martyrdom of St. Edmund by the Danes, though considerable doubt has been thrown on the identification of Hoxne with the *Hæglesdoun* of the ancient chronicles. Yet as though to anticipate such criticism a gentleman about seventy years ago examined the tree traditionally connected with the scene of Edmund's martyrdom—its site is now marked by a stone—and there, in the heart of the trunk, he found the point of an arrow, so deeply embedded and overgrown with newer wood that by counting the annual rings he was able to compute that the arrow had lain buried in the tree for at least a thousand years! That does not conclusively link either the tree or Hoxne with Edmund's death, but Mr. Dutt in *The Little Guide* quotes the tradition that "Edmund, after his defeat by the Danes, took flight and sought shelter under Goldbrook Bridge at Hoxne, where he would have been safe until his pursuers had passed had it not been for a wedding party, who, while crossing the bridge, had their attention attracted to the fugitive by the glitter of his golden spurs. They betrayed him to the Danes, and as he was led away by his captors he pronounced a curse on every couple who should ever cross the bridge on their way to the altar." The remarkable thing is that Mr. Dutt is able to add "It is said that quite recently wedding parties have avoided the bridge on account of the curse." It would be highly interesting to know exactly how—and when—the superstition of the cursed bridge originated. Such a curse hardly accords with what we know of the habits of Edmund; moreover, it seems suspicious that so close on the heels of a desperate

battle—and the Danes knew nothing of Hague Conventions—a wedding should be taking place.

After his death and decapitation, Edmund's remains were buried in a little chapel specially built at Hoxne, whence they were transferred at the beginning of the tenth century to Boaedricsworth, which henceforth became known as St. Edmundsbury.

The church at Hoxne has recently undergone restoration and in the course of the work some extraordinarily interesting wall paintings have been discovered on the north wall of the nave. They date from the fourteenth or fifteenth century and one scene in particular attracts attention by reason of the unusualness of its subject. On the ground at the foot of a large tree are seated two men, or devils, since one has a tail; they are seen sawing the tree through with a long two-handled saw. The branches of the tree, however, instead of bearing leaves produce dragons with bat-like wings, from the open mouths of which issue small figures of kings. At the top our Lord is seated in glory, with orb and sceptre. A full description of the paintings appeared in the Diocesan Magazine for November, 1926.

At the same time some very interesting discoveries of consecration crosses were made. No fewer than four were found on the inner north wall, and it has been conjectured that they may be the very crosses anointed by William Lyhart, Bishop of Norwich.

Moonrise, Mouth of the Yare

Crome

LOWESTOFT HARBOUR.

CHAPTER III

LOWESTOFT TO YARMOUTH

AT Lowestoft we are "farthest east" and sooner or later will probably find our way to that part of the beach which of all England projects farthest into the North Sea. But it is usually a curiously disappointing pilgrimage, in no way comparable to a visit to Farthest West at Land's End. Doubtless the difference in appearance between the flat beach of Lowestoft and the rocky cliffs of Cornwall is in great measure responsible for the lack of thrill in the experience; yet surely it should be no ordinary occasion to visit the spot which of all England is first kissed by the sun each morning? Land's End has its legends of Lyonnesse, but East Anglia has its Dunwich and Shipden, while within fairly recent times Easton Bavent occupied the proud easternmost position now held by Lowestoft.

At school we were told that Lowestoft had a Ness, or naze, projecting far into the sea; but alas! that promontory is no more, and the sea is doing its utmost to follow up the extinction of the promontory by the insertion of an inlet. Stout sea walls line the beach, but the low Lighthouse which for many years blinked

an optical duet with its " High " sister was removed from the threatening maw of the waves. Farther north the tumbled and shattered remains of a heavy concrete sea wall lie at the foot of the sandy cliffs, the iron railings of the promenade imparting a curiously melancholy note to the ruins. The whole of the coastline covered in this volume is very susceptible to the erosive action of the sea, but that part of it dealt with in this chapter is of particular interest on account of the changes which have befallen the last mile or so of the river Yare.

At one time the river which now provides Yarmouth's harbour flowed almost as far south as Lowestoft ere it entered the sea at Corton. That channel choked up, a new one was cut, and that in turn became choked. The Yarmouth people then cut a new channel to the sea at about the spot where Nelson's monument now stands; but that in a very short time also became choked. Once more a channel was cut at Corton, but what chances this had of success were put to flight by some of Kett's adherents, who, denied provisions they had demanded from the bailiffs of Yarmouth—a demand backed by " artillery " raided from Lowestoft, as mentioned hereunder—revenged themselves by destroying the new works. At the beginning of the sixteenth century a determined effort was made by the Yarmouth folk to lead the river to the sea at Gorleston—only to be frustrated some years later by the persistence of the stream in again using Corton. Eventually Dutch aid was sought and the principles which disciplined the waters in Holland, tamed the Yare into using the present channel.

Analogous to the history of the lower course of the Yare is that of the last few miles of the Waveney.

At no part of its career does this leisurely river show undue desire to terminate its separate existence, and a glance at the map will show that soon after passing Beccles—when, in fact, it is almost within sight of the all-devouring sea—it suddenly turns tail and sneaks away to leeward of the Herringfleet hills until at last its further procrastination is stopped by the Yare, which forthwith carries it off through Breydon water and past Yarmouth to the sea. The Yare is also of rather sinuous habit, but in view of the obvious reluctance of the Waveney waters to mingle with those of the sea one might almost be inclined to suggest that the various troubles relating to the mouth of the conjoined rivers were due to this shrinking characteristic of the Waveney!

There is however evidence to show that the Waveney did at one time at least overflow into the sea via what are now Oulton Broad and Lake Lothing. When that route lapsed from favour is not known, but it was certainly centuries ago, and the channel connecting Lake Lothing with the sea is an artificial work designed to increase the harbour facilities of Lowestoft.

While on the subject of lost rivers we may well dwell on the circumstance that in geologically recent times Yare, Waveney and Bure and all the rivers flowing eastward out of Norfolk and Suffolk poured their waters into a great northward extension of the Rhine, as has been proved by the fossilized remains found along the coast and so ably handled by the late F. Harmer and others.

From the earliest historical times the life of Lowestoft has been bound up with the sea and the fisheries. Even at the Conquest the place seems to have been noted as a fishing port, for we find that Hugo de Mont-

fort, on acquiring some local properties, stated his preference to receive rent in the form of herrings—upwards of 20,000 being necessary to fulfil his requirements. It is not suggested that these were all for his own consumption, or even that of his household: the probabilities are that with Norman astuteness he quickly realized that 20,000 herrings could be sold in the right place for a much greater sum than had been paid monetarily by previous tenants of his Lowestoft estates.

From the earliest period, too, fishing relations between Lowestoft and Yarmouth were, to say the least, strained. From time to time, indeed, affairs took the form of open warfare, and on at least one occasion Lowestoft vessels went armed against their rivals in the control of the East Anglian fisheries. The hero of this exploit was Thomas Allen, who was the owner of a "pink" which the Yarmouth men saw fit to seize. Allen determined on revenge. He crossed the channel to Flanders and there got together a small squadron of ships with which he descended upon the Yarmouth fleet and sunk no fewer than twenty boats employed in the Iceland fisheries. However much such audacity tickled the popular palate, such acts could not be officially overlooked, and Allen found it desirable to absent himself from these shores for a few years. Once more he descended upon Yarmouth, but of this raid no record has been preserved. When next we hear of this stout sea dog, however, he is a full-blown Admiral of the Fleet, sailing boldly into the Dutch merchant fleet of forty vessels trading with Smyrna. Then he fought a tremendous battle with the Dutch on the very waters on which his "pink" had ridden years before; fighting well, too, since

at the price of one ship he accounted for two score. From such engagements he passed to the pursuit of the pirates of Algeria, and finally to a quiet old age at Somerleyton Hall.

Lowestoft knew something of land warfare, too; though its experience can hardly be termed either lengthy or wide. Kett's men came here while foraging for the gathering on Mousehold Heath, and carried off the six cannon which seem to have constituted the armament of Lowestoft in those days. With this artillery they proceeded to attack Yarmouth, and on the suppression of the rebellion Lowestoft had the satisfaction of receiving from Elizabeth four cannon and two slings by way of recompense for the pieces that had been stolen—the word seems to accord better than the more sanguinary "captured."

Once again was Lowestoft to smell powder—though not in the process of combustion. On this occasion it was Cromwell who caused the production of the treasured cannon and slings. He had come to root out the "malignants" of whom he had been informed, and so formidable did his band appear as they approached that the fathers of Lowestoft wisely decided that their poor artillery would be useless as a defence and that its peppering would merely provoke Oliver to more than ordinary wrath, even though it was supported by chains drawn across the road. So the Protector entered the town, made his way to the "Swan Inn" in Mariner's Score, and dispensed justice in characteristic fashion.

In the seventeenth century Lowestoft took its share in the prosecution of some three-score witches, two poor old widows, Rose Cullenden and Amy Dury, being put on their trial for having practised witch-

craft to the disadvantage of the two daughters of a *Mr.* Samuel Pacey. They were placed in the stocks, and at Bury assizes condemned to death, not the least of the responsibility for their execution resting with "a learned doctor of Norwich" who stated himself to be "clearly of the opinion that the two girls were bewitched, for that in Denmark there had been lately a great discovery of witches and from some books that had been published in that kingdom it appears that the witches there had used the same methods of afflicting persons as had been practised by the prisoners,"—for "a learned doctor" a quite remarkable piece of reasoning, for all that it overlooked the highly debatable point as to whether the poor old ladies of Lowestoft *had* practised the methods of which they were accused.

You will not see much Lowestoft pottery nowadays, though in odd and out-of-the-way "antique" dealers' windows you may come across something very much like it. This is no place for a discussion on the characteristics of the Lowestoft ware—the subject has been well treated by Mr. Spelman—but it is worth noting that the industry was begun by Mr. Luson, of Gunton, who found some potter's clay on his estate and decided to convert it to commercial uses. A factory was set up in Lowestoft, skilled workmen were brought down from London, and for a short time all went well enough. But the London firms were not prepared to see rivals spring thus easily into being, and Luson had the chagrin to find all his best workmen leave ere production had been thoroughly organized. The men had, of course, been bribed by the London firms. Luson procured a fresh batch of men from London, and these also in due course took their sudden departure; but this

time care had been taken to note the secrets of their craft, and if on their departure the works did not make quite such good progress, their absence was quickly overcome and Lowestoft china began to find its way on to the market.

To most people the name Lowestoft conjures up visions of fine sands, shady public gardens or a broad pier commanding excellent views of the fishing boats as they come and go from the Harbour ; but to know the real Lowestoft it is necessary to turn aside from the ascending High Street, with its trams and motors, and make your way down one of the narrow lanes which literally " score " the cliff for a half-mile north of the Harbour. The Scores are Lowestoft's counterpart of Yarmouth's more famous Rows. On the whole the Scores are the more picturesque, though you may not be equally attracted by each and every of these lanes. But the Scores lead to a collection of tarred huts and nets a-drying that soon arouse other reflections, for was it not in one of these tumbledown sheds that a whole batch of letters was found addressed by no less a hand than that of Edward Fitzgerald, to his friend Posh ?

On this beach, too, it was that the curiously assorted pair first met. Do you remember " Old Fitz's " confession that he was in the habit of walking nightly up and down Lowestoft beach in the hope that some one of its inhabitants would take pity on him and speak to him ?

I wonder how many of the romantic young things who ostentatiously carry about with them nattily bound versions of Omar realize that at one time the virtual author of that masterpiece was inspired with an intense desire to be a fish merchant ? It is a side

of Fitzgerald's life that has been ventilated far less than it deserves. This is no place to air it; but if you read closely you will observe that Fitzgerald's partnership in the *Meum and Tuum* (known along the coast as the Mum and Tum) was really a very good-natured piece of philanthropy, although Fitzgerald complained that the venture, so far as he was concerned, was "all Tuum and no Meum." There is no doubt that Fitzgerald was genuinely attracted by the somewhat unstable fishermen, and was as genuinely grieved at the repeated evidences of the failure of his schemes.

If Lowestoft has few connections with the literary side of Fitzgerald's life, it can point to no fewer than three other literary associations of considerable interest. Two of these centre round the vicarage of St. Margaret's —the beautiful parish church up beyond the High Light. One of the notable vicars was that William Whiston who succeeded Isaac Newton as professor of mathematics at Cambridge and who is still remembered for his translation of *Josephus*. The other vicar I have in mind was the Rev. Francis Cunningham, through whose instrumentality George Borrow was introduced to the Bible Society, with what results those best know who have read *The Bible in Spain* and have realized what an important part the Society played, directly and indirectly, in the literary life of Borrow.

By a curious coincidence, Borrow made his later home only a mile or so from Cunningham's vicarage —at Oulton, now almost to be regarded as a western suburb of Lowestoft: certainly so in the minds of sailing men.

It is at Oulton that we first encounter George Borrow

as in this volume we tour East Anglia. Born at East Dereham, much of his youth spent at Norwich, at about thirty-seven years of age he was "in tolerably easy circumstances and willing to take some rest after a life of labour," and it was then that he settled down at Oulton, in the cottage which formed part of the property of his wife. They lived in the Cottage, which was described by a visitor as hanging "over a lonely lake covered with water-fowl and girt with dark firs through which the wind sighs sadly." The Cottage has long since disappeared, but there still remains the little summer-house where, as the late Clement Shorter put it, "he wrote and wrote and wrote" until he had, in his own words, "mountains of manuscripts." In this little building were born *The Zincali*, *The Bible in Spain*, *Lavengro*, *The Romany Rye* and *Wild Wales*. Of the scene in Borrow's day we have the following contemporary account. "He had a wooden room built on the very margin of the water, where he had many strange old books in various languages. . . . He used to spend a great deal of time in this room, reading, translating, and at times singing strange words in a stentorian voice, while passers-by on the lake would stop to listen with astonishment and curiosity to the singular sounds."

His fondness for gipsies led him to encourage them to camp in his grounds at Oulton, and there "he would visit them, with a friend or alone, and sing Romany songs. He was very fond of ghost stories and believed in the supernatural."

Many tales have been told to prove his uncouthness; almost as many to show that he could on occasion be at home in the most refined circles; and some of the best stories are the descriptions of his encounters

with the Bible Society: they, quite naturally anxious that their colporteur should be a thoroughly "worthy" man; Borrow as naturally anxious that he should appear sufficiently "worthy" to get the job of travelling in Spain, or in China, or Russia. He was a chronic victim of wanderlust; even his wife found his ways perplexing at times. "Do you know," she said to a friend, "he will say to me after breakfast, 'Mary, I am going for a walk,' and then I do not see anything more of him for three months. And all the time he will be walking miles and miles. Once he went right into Scotland and never once slept in a house. He took not even a handbag with him or a clean shirt, but lived just like any old tramp."

Clement Shorter doubted the accuracy of this reminiscence on the part of Mary Borrow, but even if George was never away for so long a period as three months without some preparation, there is ample evidence to show that he was a prodigious walker, accustomed to take tremendous "strolls" across East Anglia.

After Mary Borrow's death, he was joined at Oulton by his stepdaughter and her husband, and it was in their company that he passed away early on the morning of July 26, 1881. His mother's grave was at Oulton, but his wife had been buried in Brompton Cemetery, and in Brompton Cemetery the remains of Lavengro were interred.

The summer-house, only slightly changed since his day, still hangs over the water at Oulton, and it is to be hoped that before it is too late this little temple of literature may be acquired by some public body and that steps may be taken to preserve it in memory of the genius who gave us *Lavengro*, *The Romany Rye*

and *Wild Wales*, to say nothing of *The Bible in Spain*.

The most direct way from Lowestoft to Yarmouth is by the road or railway which follow the coast northward; but a far prettier route and one which opens up scenery which will surprise many with their own conceptions of what Norfolk should look like, is that along by Blundeston, Somerleyton and Fritton; possibly twice as long as the coast road, but correspondingly more enjoyable: and the coast road is by no means dull.

You leave Lowestoft by the Yarmouth road, passing the fine parish church as you climb the heights of North Lowestoft. Then comes an opportunity of paying respects to the astuteness of the late Mr. Colman, who amassed a fortune from the mustard people wasted rather than the relatively small quantity they consumed, and who established himself on the beautiful estate here which is now a public resort. Very pretty it is, with its lakes and islands and woodland walks: but a greater waste than that of mustard is continually reducing the area of the land hereabouts, as year by year the North Sea advances westward.

Corton lies east of the main road. A similar distance west of it lies Blundeston, famous from the references to it in *David Copperfield*. Even without Dickens it is a lovable church, with a stalwart round tower that stands boldly before the deep-roofed nave as though to protect it from harm.

The church may have changed internally since the days of Dickens, but not for many generations will his picture of a young boy become out of date:

"Here is our pew in the church. What a high-backed pew! With a window near it, out of which

our house can be seen, and *is* seen many times during the morning's service by Peggotty, who likes to make herself as sure as she can that it's not being robbed, or is not in flames. But though Peggotty's eye wanders, she is much offended if mine does, and frowns to me, as I stand upon the seat, that I am to look at the clergyman. But I can't always look at him—I know him without that white thing on, and I am afraid of his wondering why I stare so, and perhaps stopping the service to inquire—and what am I to do? It's a dreadful thing to gape, but I must do something. I look at my mother, but *she* pretends not to see me. I look at a boy in the aisle, and *he* makes faces at me. I look at the sunlight coming in at the open door through the porch, and there I see a stray sheep —I don't mean a sinner, but mutton—half making up his mind to come into the church. . . . I look to the pulpit, and think what a good place it would be to play in, and what a castle it would make, with another boy coming up the stairs to attack it, and having the velvet cushion with the tassels thrown down on his head. In time my eyes gradually shut up; and from seeming to hear the clergyman singing a drowsy song in the heat, I hear nothing, until I fall off the seat with a crash, and am taken out, more dead than alive, by Peggotty."

I believe it is a fact that Dickens never saw either the church or the Rectory of "Blunderstone"—probably he was attracted by the name—but the place can claim personal acquaintance with another literary man, albeit of a different reputation: Thomas Gray, the poet. At one time his friend Nicholls lived at Blundeston Lodge, where gardening occupied all his spare time. Gray's reply to an enthusiastic description

by Norton of his little estate is worth quoting. "So you have a garden of your own and you plant and transplant, and are dirty and amused? Are you not ashamed of yourself? Why, I have no such thing, you monster. My gardens are in my windows, like those of a lodger up three pairs of stairs in Petticoat Lane."

In contrast to Gray's "gardens" are the really fine grounds attached to Somerleyton Hall, towards which a lane—none too wide when motor coaches are abroad—leads westward from Blundeston. They are open at stated times to the public; or were, but recently a fire destroyed the Hall built by that Sir Thomas Allen whose fortunes we traced in connection with the history of Lowestoft, and it is possible that public access to the gardens may be affected by the catastrophe. It is all very pretty country, however, and the little range of model cottages lining the road is itself almost worth the trouble of the trip to see. Not far away, to the north-west, is a picturesque old church at Herringfleet.

HERRINGFLEET CHURCH.

We are now close down to the banks of the Waveney, and as we work our way northward to Fritton may catch gleams of the river through the trees on the left. The Waveney and the Yare here take on parallel courses, and from St. Olaves the New Cut makes short work of what must have been a somewhat tedious journey to Reedham in the days when it was necessary

to sail down to Breydon Water and then work up the Yare.

Fritton is almost indisputably the prettiest spot in easternmost England. The long lake is set in gently rising hills which in turn are graced by beautiful woods; there is none of the vast unvarying landscape associated with Broadland, and more than one visitor has found here a distinct resemblance to Windermere, on a small scale, of course.

Gorleston, now to all intents and purposes a suburb of Yarmouth, has, surprisingly enough, a history almost as long as that of the larger town. It was long the site of a Priory of which a tower remained until the early years of last century. The establishment is commemorated by the name of a modern street crossing the site; of the rest we are told suggestively that "three cartloads of encaustic tiles with armorial bearings, taken from the ruins, are said to have been broken up to mend the roads in 1800." A statement which may be borne in mind as we read the lament of an iconoclast who visited Gorleston church in the seventeenth century and after defacing the font found he "could not destroy the stained glass in the upper windows as no one in Gorleston would lend him a ladder." There is in the church, too, a brass to Sir John Bacon, of the thirteenth century. It is more than usually interesting on account of the belief that it was torn from its place by none other than Dowsing himself, only to be rescued and, in recent times, replaced.

But Gorleston dwells little on the past, being one of the most bracing resorts on the East Coast. Whether it was the pioneer of beach tents I do not know, but long years before those welcome substitutes for the old-fashioned bathing "machine" found their way

to Margate and Bournemouth, I remember seeing rows of tents on Gorleston sands. The custom still lingers, but bell tents have given place to the more roomy "box" variety.

The most picturesque view of Gorleston is from its southern border. Looking towards Yarmouth, one then follows the cliffs to where they slope gradually down to the beginning of the stout old timber pier which guards the mouth of the Yare.

After the sands, the Pier is Gorleston's "lion." It is one of the most interesting structures on this coast. Southward it is riddled and ribbed with enormous timber baulks, heavily tarred, among which it is a joy to snuggle with book and pipe; while the deck overlooks the constant stream of shipping of all kinds entering and leaving Yarmouth Harbour. Amateur fishermen linger here, too, though the tide runs rather fast for all but the most heavily leaded lines.

Across the Harbour mouth begin the South Denes: that sweep of dunes which carry, or used to carry, up to and beyond the tall Nelson column which sentinels Yarmouth on the south as the revolving tower presides over the northern end of the town.

Mentally reviewing the varied interests of Yarmouth one is reminded of the magazine articles which used to describe how Edward VII could have made a fortune as a connoisseur of cigars had he not been busily engaged in what an irreverent American has called "this King business." Yarmouth as monarch of seaside resorts is irreproachable, but should there suddenly be a national revulsion against such places then Yarmouth will be able comfortably to fall back on its fisheries or on its architectural and archæological amenities.

Even the archæologists would deplore the departure of the entertainment business from Yarmouth, however, since that is of itself of some historical interest, for the origin of Yarmouth seems to have been in a fair and market held on a bare sandbank that formed at the mouth of a wide estuary which then accommodated the Yare, Bure and Waveney. The recurrence of the fair gave rise to dwellings which were permanent in the technical sense at least, and which were the beginnings of Yarmouth. So that the Revolving Tower may be regarded by symbolists as something more than an extensive if dizzy viewpoint.

The site of the town is of considerable interest, moreover, since it is among the newest geological features of East Anglia. It is generally assumed that so recently as the fifth century Norwich stood at the head of a wide-mouthed estuary by means of which the Yare, the Bure and the Waveney flowed into the North Sea. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle tells us that in the year 495 " came two leaders into Britain, Cerdic and Cynric his son, with five ships, at a place that is called Cerdic's-ore ; " and again in 514 " came the West Saxons into Britain, with three ships, at the place that is called Cerdic's-ore."

This " place that is called Cerdic's-ore " is generally accepted to have been the sandbank formed at the head of the Yare estuary. Later Bede alludes to it as " Sardichesore, quae nunc vocatur Gernemuth " —the earliest form of Yarmouth.

And other folk than Cerdic and his men began to frequent the sandbank. Another old chronicler tells us :

" As the sand upon which Yarmouth is built did growe to be drye, and was not overflown by the sea

but waxed in heighte and also in greatnes, much store of people from the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk did resorte hither, and did pitche tabernacles and boothes for the enterteynenge of such sea-faring men and fisher men and merchants as would resorte unto that place, eyther to sell their herringefishe or other comodoties."

The colony appears to have waxed in consonance with the sandbank upon which it was situated, so much so that when Losinga was looking around for suitable places in which to erect churches that would expiate his sin of simony, his eye fell upon Yarmouth, and it was the little Saxon church of St. Benet there which was replaced by such a good Norman building as Losinga would be likely to erect under the particular circumstances.

We shall several times encounter the works and influence of this great ecclesiastic as we progress through Norfolk. His name and birthplace have been much debated, but there would certainly seem to have been some appropriateness in the theory which derived the surname Losinga from a word meaning "persuasive," for Herbert was possessed of a manner, we are assured, that was not merely "taking" but at times appears to have been downright acquisitive. The measure of the man was shown when he bought the Thetford bishopric. It has been represented that he performed this act under some kind of delusion, and that not till afterwards did the real sinfulness of the transaction appear to him. But I incline to think the whole thing was carefully prearranged. Thetford and Winchester were snapped up while the opportunity offered: then came the fit of repentance, the journey to Rome and the return of the purchased properties to the Pope —in the hope, of course, that the Pope would accept

the repentance at its face value and with a kindly admonition to refrain from simony in future tell Losinga to keep the lands and offices—in fact to condone the result, even though denouncing the actual monetary transaction.

Of course, the Pope had to take official cognisance of the fact that simony had been committed, and Yarmouth benefited in that Losinga's penance took the form of church-building. In addition to St. Nicholas Church here, Norwich Cathedral and the beautiful church of St. Margaret's at Lynn also arose as expressions of Losinga's grief. But it is worthy of note that at Norwich there is record that much of the work was carried out by workmen belonging to the king, who also supplied money and material, while other funds were collected from the general public by the assiduous priors under Losinga's control.

However these things may have been, the fact remains that the little church of St. Benet at Yarmouth was replaced by a building which served the steadily growing town until in the thirteenth century Walter de Suffield, " seeing such buyldinges made and such stir of people resortinge thither, buylded by himselfe and by devotion of good people a fayer and goodlie churche, for the honour of God and St. Nicholas. To the whiche churche, beinge buylded, were given many offerings and tythes by the seamen hither resortinge."

Some idea of the extent of these " offerings and tythes " can be hazarded from the mere dimensions of the church, which is of proportions that would befit a cathedral. But the zeal of such iconoclasts as Dowsing swept away all the ornaments and hangings and since their day restorers have been at work, so that it is not easy to recapture the glamour which invested

the building in earlier years. Where now we are faced with bare walls and open roofs hung gorgeous banners and tapestries and magnificently decorated lamps. And it must not be forgotten that all this pageantry had its reflection in the conduct of the services. Sermons were not merely oral: they took the form of plays and games. Such entertainments pleased the simple folk and helped to swell the purse of the church. Thus in 1493 "a game played on Christmas daye" produced the respectable sum of xvs xd; while ixs xd was entered against "the game players of 1508." Among the entries of this kind there is a series all of which have reference to a star:

1462 For making a new star.
1506 For hanging the star and scowering.
1512 For a line called a nine-thread and six-thread line, to lead the star.

These were all preparations for the Feast of the Star, a typical performance of the kind which took place at Epiphany. In the opening scene three priests dressed to represent the Three Kings appeared, with servants bearing gifts, in various parts of the church and, joining forces, together made their way to the altar. On arrival there one of the kings pointed to the star and then all three chanted "Let us go and enquire." The precentors answered "Let the Wise men Come," and then a procession was formed. As it entered the nave a crown-like star, hanging before the rood and doubtless well "scowered," was illuminated, and the Wise Men pointed to it and cried "Behold, the Star of the East!"

Then came the most dramatic part of the performance, for the star (drawn by "the line called a nine-

thread and a six-thread line ") began to move towards the altar. The Wise Men followed, and on arrival within the sanctuary were greeted by two priests who exclaimed, " We are those whom you seek," and at the same time drew aside a curtain to disclose a child, representing the infant Jesus. The Wise Men fell down worshipping, while their followers placed the gifts upon the altar. The Wise Men would continue praying until wrapped in sleep, from which they would be aroused by a boy dressed as an angel who announced that " All things which the prophets said are fulfilled ! "

Such a performance in the gorgeously decorated church could hardly fail to make a deep impression on the minds of the simple folk who would come in from neighbouring villages in the lonely broadland : to-day we are too sophisticated to yield to the charm of anything so " home made " and childlike.

Such performances bespeak a prosperous Yarmouth, and there was, of course, a very sound reason for the rise of such a thriving town on what had been but a bare sandbank. The reason even now is not far to seek. Yarmouth was, is, and—as far as one dare predict—always will be of the sea.

So early as the period of the Conquest the place was the resort of " a greate store of sea fairinge men, as also of greate numbers of the fishermen of Fraunce, Flaunders and of Holland, Zealande and all the lowe countryes yearly from the feaste of St. Michaell th'Archangell untylle the feaste of Sainte Martine, about the takinge, sellinge and buyinge of herringes."

Not unnaturally disputes arose, often with bitter consequences : one year, for instance, a particular part of the fishing ground was invaded by some French vessels known as " busses " which not only fished the

ground but, taking a leaf out of the book of the dog in the manger, anchored there also, to the exclusion of others wishing to fish.

Such a state of affairs it was obviously the duty of the Barons of the Cinque Ports to amend, and although their disciplinary measures were not allowed without long and keen disputes that did not always take a merely verbal form, the East Coast fishery was eventually policed with the aid of the Cinque Ports. Each year during the "Free Fair" period—that between the "feastes of St. Martin th'Archangell and that of Sainte Martine," as above, it was their custom to send northward two representatives to co-operate with the Bailiffs of Yarmouth in the maintenance of the peace. Few documents of the time are more generally interesting than the customals or records of the Cinque Ports: in addition to providing fact and figure they also shed a wonderful light on the habits and manners of far-off days. Read, for instance, of the manner in which the bailiffs of Great Yarmouth received John Conye of Hastings and John Tooks of Dover, when they came north to the Fair of 1603—the year that saw the accession of James I:

"Uppon Thursdaie, at night, beeing the xxijth daie of September, wee lodged at Lyastoff and there dyned; on the next daie, being frydaie, at about three of the Clock in the afternoon wee came to the towne of Great Yarmouth, and at our comynge to the Bridge many people being there assembled did bid us very kindly welcome. And after we had been at our lodginge about half an houre was sent unto us one of the officers of Mr Jeffrey Ponyett, elder bayliff elect of Yarmouth, to entreat us to dyne with the said Mr. Ponyett the next daie; whose kindness we thankfully accepted.

And immediately after was sent unto us one of the officers of Mr William Grey, Bayliff also elect, and in the name of Mr Grey entreated us to dine with him the next daie: on which we were formerly invited to the said Mr Bayliff Ponyet his house and had promised. The said Officer was again sent unto us from the said Mr Bayliff Grey to invite us to Supper the said next daie at night. . . . Then the said Mr Bayliff Ponyet and Mr Bayliff Grey came unto us themselves and bid us very kindly welcome and stayed with us about the space of half an houre. . . .

"Uppon Saterdaie we went towards the church, it being Michaelmas Daie, and not farr from our lodginge Mr Henry Stanton and John Gyles, the old bayliffs, walked together uppon the Stronde and espying us goinge towardes the Church they came unto us, byddinge us very heartily welcome and desyrd o^r^ company with them to the Church; and because it was then somewhat early they perswaded us to walk the upper way towards the Dens, and after our comynge with them they and wee came hither before the accustomed houre they walked with us a quarter of an houre or thereabout in the Church, and then they went up to their seat, requesting us to have gone with them, but we thankfully refused so to doe, alledginge that phapps some of their brethren would not take it well, but we would take our places in the Chauncell until they did send for us. And immediately after the beginning of the service the said Bayliffs of Yarmouth sent one of their officers unto us with the request that wee should take our places with them in their seats. . . . And as we passed by them of the xxiiij^tie^ there present, wch was in nomber xv or thereabouts, wee were kindly saluted by them. . . ."

What a delightful picture that is of the manœuvrings and etiquette which invested these worthy bailiff-merchants of old! The pleasure of the southern men at their "kindly welcome" and the eagerness of the Yarmouth men to foster friendly relations with the two representatives of the powerful Confederacy, to create and maintain good impressions that would be useful when the time came—as it did within the next day or so—to indicate firmly but without fuss that while Yarmouth was glad of the Ports' co-operation, as from one power to another power of equal standing, they were certainly not in the mood to accept every dictum that emanated from Sandwich, and proposed to do certain things in the way that seemed most appropriate to the people of Yarmouth. And so these two good souls from Hastings and from Dover were duly fussed and feasted, and yet all seems to have been done with a charming simple dignity that makes the description of their visit to Yarmouth exceedingly attractive.

Needless to say, in a borough of such individuality as that of Yarmouth many curious customs survive even to the present day. At a time when suffrage and the "flapper vote" are still fresh in mind, it is worth recalling that right down to last century the mayor and other officers were selected by an "inquest" of twelve persons who, annually on the 29th of August, were locked in the Hall of the Tol-House "without meat, drink, fire or candle" until a selection had been made that was satisfactory to at least nine out of the twelve! No doubt the Yarmouthian who first evolved this plan was credited with the wisdom and cunning of Solomon, but it is sorrowfully to be reported that on at least one occasion means appear to have been dis-

covered for circumventing the rule regarding food and warmth, since the "inquest" remained locked up from Friday until the following Wednesday! It should be explained that the unfortunate douzaine were chosen by an "innocent," or unlettered person, who dipped into a hat and pulled out twelve of twenty-four names there written on slips of paper. With the increase of book-learning and the consequent scarcity of folk fortified with the requisite amount of "innocence," a young child was entrusted with the task of picking out the tickets from the hat; but we are assured that the practice continued until well into Queen Victoria's reign.

This Tol-House forms one of the sights of Yarmouth and is well worth seeing, both for the old building itself, and for the gruesome collection of instruments of torture there collected. It is of further interest as standing in the quarter devoted to the Rows, that almost unique series of narrow streets of which the plan earned Yarmouth the nickname of the "Norfolk gridiron." Bearing in mind the insular position of Yarmouth, and also that the mouth of the Yare was at one time much farther north than at present, it is not difficult to believe that the reason for these narrow streets was simply lack of space. Yarmouth was a walled town and its population was ever growing, and the remarkable thing to my mind is that the rows should be so straight and parallel: their regularity is reminiscent of the streets of ancient Winchelsea, which were almost a foreshadowing of modern town-planning ideas.

As it became unnecessary to live within the walls, so the need for building in such close-packed rows departed; but Yarmouth's Rows remain as one more

Yarmouth Beach
C. 1840

example of the ingenuity and independence of the Yarmouth idea.

But the focus of life in those days was on the fine old quay. Those who know Amsterdam or Rotterdam will discover a pleasant flavour of Holland in this broad quay. The long line of wharves either side the river is generally thickly clustered with shipping of all kinds—a good sprinkling of Dutch and Norwegian craft usually being in evidence—and a run in the boat connecting Yarmouth and Gorleston will reveal even more of the activities of this great fishing port.

The history of the first bloater is rather reminiscent of the story concerning the invention of roast pork. The story goes that a herring-curer named Bishop was preparing to lock up his premises one night about a century ago when he observed that a number of fresh herrings had been left uncured. In order to preserve the fish, he sprinkled them with salt, spitted them, and left them overnight in a smoke-house, in which oak-logs were being burned. "The next morning," Mr. J. W. de Caux, J.P., assures us—and we can believe him—"he was both astonished and delighted at their appearance and with their aroma and flavour." In such a haphazard manner was the bloater ushered into the world!

To realize the extent and importance of this industry Yarmouth should be visited in late autumn or early winter. The herrings, with their attendant fleet of trawlers and drifters, are then off Yarmouth, and to receive and deal with the immense catches landed daily thousands of sturdy fisher lasses invade the town and Yarmouth is given over to the herring as completely as a farm yields to the harvest when the great days come. Wherever one walks are men talking fish;

wherever one walks one can hardly escape the sight of fish, and certainly you will ever after be able to recognize the smell of herrings if you spend a day at Yarmouth during the height of the fishery season. The whole procedure is so foreign to anything ordinarily seen by the townsman that even if only a day can be spared the trip is worth making.

Here are a few statistics. Each year there are landed at Yarmouth round about five hundred million herrings; on any single day one may see as many as sixty millions brought to the wharves. This tremendous harvest is the work of about ten thousand men afloat, and a vast number ashore, of course, manufacturing the boxes and barrels for packing the fish, and the nets and boats by means of which they are caught. The "stars" of the week, from the sightseer's point of view, are generally held to be the women engaged in gutting the fish: these may number as many as seven or eight thousand, while another 2,000 men will find work in the curing houses. Visit Yarmouth in January, after the fishing season is past, and you may wonder how ever such a community manage to thrive; visit it in July or August or on any Bank Holiday, and you may think you have found the secret of Yarmouth's long and vigorous life. But it is not until one has watched the wonderful sight along by the river during the height of the fishing season that one begins to get an insight into Yarmouth's real importance to the country.

Of the comings and goings of Nelson; of the adventures of David Copperfield—of Dickens himself—at Yarmouth there is not space to write. We have lingered long in this fascinating old town. Ere leaving the coast for awhile, however, we may well make the

short trip northward to see the few remains of the once proud castle of Caister, built by that great fifteenth-century Norfolk figure—Sir John Fastolff. But Caister is chiefly remembered in connection with the Pastons, to one of whom Fastolff left the property. The rapid rise of this letter-writing family was not favourably regarded by the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, and hardly had Fastolff been laid in his grave when the Pastons had to withstand a siege in Caister. The history of the stirring scenes that took place within and about these time-tinted walls is inimitably written in the *Paston Letters*, from which we also derive information of pirates who dared to " come up to the land and played them on Caister sands as homely as they were Englishmen." Nowadays, Caister Castle is visited for the sake of its tall tower, reflected in the clear water at its foot ; while Caister is known throughout the land on account of its holiday camp. The place stands " at the edge of beyond." Southward to Yarmouth, the beach boasts a tolerable population ; but go in the opposite direction and the madding crowd is quickly left behind, nor will more than a solitary couple or so be encountered all the way round to Mundesley.

PULL'S FERRY, NORWICH.

CHAPTER IV

NORWICH AND THE YARE

THE Yare is not the most sinuous of the rivers of Norfolk, but by contriving to flow some seventy miles in the course of its journey from Shipdam to Breydon—a crow's flight of only thirty miles—it shows, at any rate, no indecent haste to leave the pleasant country directly east and west of Norwich. Much of its lower course is through flat lands—it will be remembered that until comparatively recent times (at any rate into the eleventh century) a wide-spreading estuary, fed by the Yare, Waveney and Bure, covered the ground immediately westward of Yarmouth—and it is this lower course which is best known, since it forms a very popular way of reaching Norwich from Yarmouth or Lowestoft; but those who follow the stream westward towards its source will find that part which lies above Norwich at least as attractive as many of the lower reaches.

The voyage up the Yare begins, strictly, at the point where that river leaves Breydon Water—a huge Broad alternately mud and water—but not until Reedham is passed do we get a glimpse of the scenery more typical of the river. As we draw near to the parting-point of Yare and Waveney at the southern end of Breydon, a glimpse will be caught of the ruins of Burgh Castle, one of the most impressive Roman remains in this country, as well on account of its fabric as its site. The most striking feature of the ruins are the six huge bastions, rising some fourteen feet above the ground and of immense girth. Curiously, they are not, as might have been expected, hollow, but are solid columns of masonry. Another curious point is that they stand alongside the wall, and are not built on to it, as would have been the case had they been erected at the same time as the wall. The small cavities in the top of each bastion were presumably mountings for some kind of heavy weapon.

Burgh Castle was Gariononum in the early days of the Roman occupation; one of the strongholds of the "Counts of the Saxon Shore," charged with the duty of protecting south-east England against the attacks of Norse raiders. The northernmost fort of the series was at Brancaster; attached to Burgh Castle were subsidiary camps at Caister and at Burgh St. Peter, overlooking Oulton Broad; others were at Bradwell at the mouth of the Maldon River, Reculver, Richborough, etc. Excavations have disclosed the remains of a kind of quay or wharf on the Waveney bank.

The Roman well should not be overlooked; nor the round-towered church; but the most interesting religious association of the spot is connected with

St. Fursey. Bede tells how, during the seventh century "there came out of Ireland a holy man named Fursey, renowned both for his words and actions and remarkable for singular virtues, being desirous to live a stranger for our Lord whenever the opportunity should offer." He was well received by Sigebert, King of East Anglia, who gave him a plot of ground on which he "applied himself to build with all speed a monastery and to establish regular discipline therein." We are told further that the monastery was founded within the area of a castle not far from the sea, and certain authorities have deemed the evidence conclusive that the castle in point was that which had been Gariononum in Roman days, and is Burgh Castle to-day. But excavation does not appear to have supported the contention, and one gathers that the romantic situation of the place had at least something to do with the suggestion that "Furseus, who had the poetic temperament, when darkness came on would sit and brood in his cell at Burgh Castle over the doings of angels, the joys of the blessed and the conflict of evil spirits for the souls of men. These imaginings by the side of the Waveney were destined to bear wonderful fruit," for, according to Palgrave, "they kindled the spark which occasioned the first of the metrical compositions from whose combinations, centuries later, the Divina Commedia of Dante arose." In which case Burgh Castle would rank with Woodbridge and Oulton as literary shrines of East Anglia.

Reedham was also fortified in some way by the Romans: so, at least, excavations have suggested, and it is even thought that a pharos stood on the rising ground behind the village. But there is little trace to-day of Romans or of the court of Edmund,

the East Anglian king, who here had a curious encounter with a shipwrecked Dane—an encounter which had dire consequences.

Although the Danes had harried East Anglia time and again, when a certain Dane not very euphoniously named Lodbrog was driven ashore by a storm, Edmund received him courteously and gave him the hospitality due to a shipwrecked man.

Lodbrog settled down with the court at Reedham, but his skill as a huntsman rapidly roused the jealousy of one named Bern, who did not hesitate to murder the Danish guest. As punishment for this crime, Bern was set adrift in an open boat, and spent several days very uncomfortably floating on the wide bosom of the North Sea. At length he was cast on the shore of Denmark, where he promptly adopted the rôle of righteous indignation and poured out to the Danish court a shocking tale of Edmund's murder of the shipwrecked Lodbrog. The Danes were probably not entirely without an excuse for raiding England again —not that want of an excuse would have baulked them—but they quickly seized this opportunity of striking a fresh blow, and in 870, as the Chronicle tells us, Hingwar and Hubba "slew the king" and then proceeded to Ely and Medehamsted (as Peterborough then was known) and there they made such havoc that, as we shall read on a later page, "a monastery which was before full rich was now reduced to nothing."

From Reedham the Yare pursues a sinuous but increasingly beautiful course towards Norwich. Every mile or so we are within reach of some little village or town that would be worth exploration—those with time might well follow the little Chet at least as far

as Loddon, a small market town with a good church. Cantley is well known by reason of its Red House; Buckenham for its ferry, and many another village within hail of the Yare is well known to anglers.

A mile or so above Buckenham Ferry we are abreast of Rockland Broad, which figures largely in the scheme which a Mr. Botterill unfolded a few years before the War. It was his ambition to convert Rockland Broad into nothing less than a naval base! The Broad was to be deepened, and adequate canal communication was to be provided between Rockland and the North Sea. Criticism that Rockland was far from industrial centres was disarmed by the further provision that since the Royal Arsenal was wrongly placed at Woolwich it should be moved to Norfolk, so that Rockland would become "a Portsmouth next Norwich." Fortunately for the scenic attractions of the Yare, the scheme has not yet matured.

NORWICH CATHEDRAL.

By Brundall, Surlingham and Postwick we sail onwards towards Norwich, through country that long ago made its appeal to the Norwich School of painters. Then, having passed the beautiful reach of Thorpe,

we find the Wensum coming in on the left and are fairly at Norwich.

It is noticeable how many towns in East Anglia betray their age by their situation, close down by a river at a point where it was fordable. Norwich is no exception, commanding as it does the Wensum, the Yare and the Tas at their confluence and deriving from these waterways—in early days at any rate—valuable protection against invaders from north, east and south. If further information were required concerning the strategic worth of Norwich it could easily be gleaned from a map; roads radiating to all corners of the compass, like the lines of a spider's web—there are nearly a score of them.

Years ago Walter White summed up the Norwich atmosphere in words that still stand true: A cathedral town without drowsiness, and where noisy factories disturb the ecclesiastical quiet but have not produced the distressing ugliness of the manufacturing towns of Yorkshire and Lancashire. . . . And there are breweries which maintain the reputation they enjoyed when the old rhymer sang of a certain Peter:

> He lives among us in good cheer,
> Grows fat and sleek on Norwich beer.

As to the origins of this remarkable city, we may quote a certain effort prepared for the delectation of Elizabeth when she paid a visit to Norwich, and which ran:

> King Gurgunt I am hight, King Belin's eldest son,
> Whose sire, Dunwallo, first the British crown did wear.
> Whom truthless Gutlacke forced to pass the surging seas,
> His falsehood to revenge, and Denmark laid to spoil,
> And finding in return this place a gallant vent,
> This castle fair I built. . . .

Unfortunately the licence allowed to poets does not make for accurate history, and investigations have shown King Gurgunt's connection with Norwich to have been, to put it politely, very slight indeed.

That there were stirring events here quite early in history is proved by the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which records under date A.D. 1004 : " This year came Sweyne with his fleet to Norwich, plundering and burning the whole town " : a raid that led to the purchase of a truce which was broken, the invading army leaving their ships and descending upon Thetford, which place they put to the flame. They escaped back to their ships only after hard fighting with the East Anglian forces which tried to intercept them : " as they said themselves, they never met with worse handplay in England than Ulfkytel brought them."

That is but one of scores of similar scenes enacted around the great mound which still forms part of Norwich Castle, and which, *mutatis mutandus*, was repeated several times after the earthen mound had been crowned with the Norman Keep which still stands stolidly in the city's centre, though nowadays it fulfils a more peaceful purpose as a Museum. The structure shows evident signs of former strength ; this would have been even more apparent before the filling-in of two further ditches which surrounded the motte. Yet for all its strength, soon after it passed from the militant hands of the Bigods it lapsed to the status of a prison, a purpose it fulfilled until replaced by the gloomy pile on the heights overlooking the city.

So that it is as a museum rather than as a castle that the pile is visited to-day : and a very fine collection it is, for birds and geological specimens hardly to be matched by a museum of like standing. In fact,

one might by pondering over the various cases and frames here gain in a few hours such an impression of East Anglian history, life and thought as could otherwise only be gathered with immense labour.

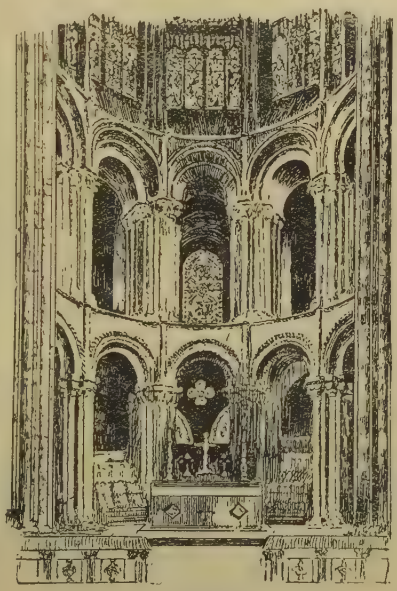
The roof of the Castle is no bad place from which to gather a general impression of the "lay-out" of Norwich; nor is it an inappropriate moment to recall the words of Samuel Woodward concerning the foundation of the city. "No spot in the neighbourhood could have afforded the original founders of this fortress such advantages as this place presents; and these advantages can be fully appreciated only by examining the ground with the eye of a geologist. Reverting to the probable period when the Britons fixed on this spot as a place of security, two thousand years have elapsed. At that period the Yare and the Wensum were not the insignificant streams they now appear, but occupied the whole of the alluvial flat of their valleys, making that part of the present City Liberty in which the Castrum is placed a peninsula, leaving only a land-pass of about half a mile in width across the west, upon the ridge of which the present Dereham Road passes. And to add to its security the spot itself was in a corner, surrounded on nearly all sides by water; so that it is a matter of no surprise that a place thus fortified by nature should have been selected. This spot is one of the salient angles of the valley, having an elevation of about a hundred feet above the level of the river; the continuation of this level towards the south constitutes the Berg Street, now corruptly called Ber Street. The ballium on which the Castle stands is about twenty feet higher, raised, it is presumed, by art, with the soil of the inner ditch."

The Castle looks down on the Cattle Market, on Saturdays a wonderful sight, especially for those hailing from cities where large numbers of living animals are not often seen together. Sheep, cattle, horses and pigs crowd its pens on market days, and wonderfully fine stock most of it is. One little habit will tickle the stranger ; the sight of burly dealers strolling around the pig pens holding in their hands small pairs of scissors. So small are the scissors that many of the men seem to have difficulty in getting their fingers through the handle-loops. A little patience will reveal the purpose of this little display of steel : on purchasing a pig, it is the custom for the dealer to cut, with his scissors, his initials or mark in the hair of the chosen beast and so establish its identity beyond a doubt !

The most important building in Norwich is, of course, the Cathedral, and the most delightful external views of it are gained from the eastern side, across the river. From the vicinity of the Cattle Market, Rose Lane or Prince of Wales Road lead to Foundry Bridge over the Wensum. Immediately after crossing, turn left and follow the river-side northward. The Cathedral soon begins to draw attention across the water, and at Pull's Ferry the scene is charming indeed. One of the devices of Losinga when he built the Cathedral was the construction of a short canal from the river so that the stone might be shipped right to the masons' yard. The Watergate at the Ferry is part of the old city walls, which here ran alongside the river. The Gate gave access to the Cathedral precincts, and the path leading alongside the cricket ground affords a splendid view of the east end of the Cathedral. The flying buttresses supporting the east end and other

details give to the lower part of the building a wonderful grace and dignity that are in admirable accord with the beautifully tapering spire.

The east end of the building is notable for the semi-circular apse and the rounded walls of the chapels of either side. At one time the Lady Chapel extended eastward from this apse: traces are still to be seen. Traces remain, too, of the vanished Chapter House which once lay beyond the south transept, but the Cloisters still exist, and very peaceful they are. As the steps into the Cathedral are ascended the remarkable decoration of the Prior's Doorway calls for notice.



THE APSE, NORWICH.

Here and there up and down our land are doorways, arches and other relics which hint at the beauty of Norman architecture; but Norwich Cathedral is a wonderful revelation of the scope and grandeur of a pure Norman building. Before the tiers of arcades here, our little rhapsodies on a few feet of zigzag moulding still to be found in an odd parish church seem very overdone; as we enter Norwich Cathedral the sudden

vision of the great piers and semicircular arches is one almost to take the breath away, and the effect of grandeur is furthered by the great length of the roof, which extends in an unbroken series of vaultings from the west end of the nave to the east end of the presbytery. Of this roof, which was added in the fifteenth century, I am not entirely enamoured as a companion of the pure Norman work by which it is supported: it is not altogether inharmonious, but there is a lurking sense of unfitness in the contiguity of palm-leaf vaulting and Norman arcading. Qualms such as these, however, go merely to emphasize the purity of the Norman work, for the roof is really very fine; and with field-glasses one may discern on the bosses the three hundred figures depicting sacred history, beginning with the Creation at the east end of the nave and working westwards to scenes from the New Testament. In the ceiling will be observed the hole from which, according to various authorities, a censer was swung at stated festivals or from which —say others—it was sometimes customary to suspend a boy who impersonated an angel in some such play as we have discussed in connection with Great Yarmouth parish church.

Numerous monuments claim attention as the round of the cathedral is made, but beyond the elaborate stone screen separating nave from choir are two not to be lightly passed by: that of Sir William Boleyn, grandfather of Anne Boleyn, whom we shall meet again at Blickling; and that of stout old Sir Thomas Erpingham, he who built the gate giving access to the Cathedral precincts from the west. Standing now before his tomb we may fittingly recall Shakespeare's *Henry V*:

King Henry. "Good morrow, old Sir Thomas Erpingham:
A good soft pillow for that good white head
Were better than a churlish turf of France.
Erpingham. "Not so, my liege; this lodging likes me better
Since I may say 'Now lie I like a king.'"

However, the venerable knight came safely back from Agincourt, and was here laid to rest, and he is further commemorated by the statue on the gateway which bears his name.

And thinking of the stout heart there buried, one's mind passes unconsciously to another laid to rest in our own time only a few yards distant—that of Edith Cavell, that fine spirit whose watchword "Patriotism is not enough," breathes a rare air of chivalry and whose simple grave here is more in harmony with that air than the brutal monument in London.

But the outstanding feature of the eastern end of Norwich Cathedral is the magnificent Norman apse, and of that apse the outstanding feature is the Bishop's Throne, its position carrying us at a bound to the very earliest Christian churches, planned after the law courts of Rome. The basilicas were rectangular courts having a semicircular recess or apse at one end, in the centre of which was a dais on which was the judge's seat. When the early Christians began to build churches on the lines of the basilicas it was but natural that what had been the judge's seat should become the bishop's throne, and although the arrangement is perpetuated in a hundred churches in Italy, for instance, only at Norwich will you find, this side the Alps, a Norman apse having within it the bishop's throne.

We have seen that the Cathedral came to Norwich through the instrumentality of Herbert Losinga—already encountered at Yarmouth. It will be remem-

bered that the original see of East Anglia was centred upon Dunwich, being subsequently divided with a second bishopric located at Elmham. Here the northern see rested from 671 until in 1075 it was moved to the town of Thetford, and it was this bishopric which was the subject of Losinga's act of simony. However, he made his peace with the Pope and the King, as already related, and in 1096 began to build Norwich Cathedral.

However you classify him, Herbert Losinga is an intriguing figure, and if you have been inclined to dwell too particularly on his fault, a visit to Norwich will convince you also that Losinga was a man to whom even simony would appear almost justified in view of the ends that act was designed to serve. Norwich Cathedral is important architecturally because so large a part of the fabric was the conception of a single brain—the major portion of the Cathedral was finished in fifty years, much of it under Losinga's personal supervision. It is interesting historically because what we know of his life story shows Losinga to have been a man of outstanding calibre ; a man of large and far-seeing ideas. He was also possessed, as became a statesman, of considerable force of will, and his driving power was lavished on the workmen engaged in building his Cathedral Church of the Holy and undivided Trinity, in the years that the Rufus was perilously chasing deer in the New Forest. I like particularly the letter quoted in I. C. Hannah's *Heart of East Anglia*, addressed by Losinga to the monks engaged upon the work of building. "I love you," he wrote, "and I am striving to deliver you, slow and indolent as you are, out of the hands of the divine severity. Often have I stirred you up in person by

reminding you both privately and publicly of your duty in this respect, to apply yourselves fervently and diligently to the work of your church and to show carefulness in that work, as done under the inspection of God's own eyes. I was wont to entreat and to persuade you and would that I had succeeded in convincing your minds how great is the sincerity with which God must be served! But alas! The work drags on, and in providing materials you show no

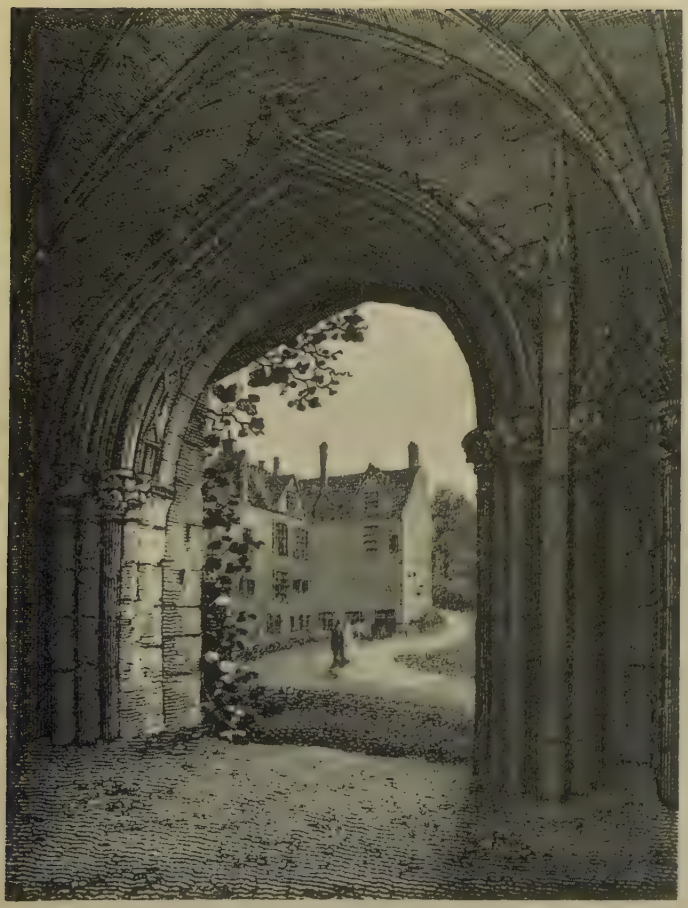
THE CLOISTERS, NORWICH.

enthusiasm. Behold the servants of the king and mine own are really earnest in the works allotted to them. They gather stones, carry them to the spot and fill with them fields and ways, houses and courts. You meanwhile are asleep with folded hands, numbed, as it were, and frost-bitten by a winter of negligence, shuffling and failing in your duty through a paltry love of ease."

One can imagine the energetic Herbert following this letter up with a personal visit, and the consternation he would cause among the somnolent monks!

What a very graphic little picture of the building of the Cathedral is conveyed, too, in his reference to the great stores of stone brought for the masons, a huge dump covering "fields and ways, houses and courts." Somehow one does not think of a cathedral growing stone by stone upon ground that a year before had borne crops of grain, but here we have a little picture that links the building of the great church with many a scene—though on a scale less grand—in our own land at the present day.

For all that one is grateful to Herbert Losinga for Norwich Cathedral and St. Margaret's at Lynn, I am not, I fear, entirely convinced of his understanding of the greatness of "the sincerity with which God must be served," as he put it to the lazy monks, for I find myself linking Herbert Losinga with another Norwich spirit—that of George Borrow! Certainly many of Borrow's assurances to the Bible Society were made tongue-in-cheek, and if Losinga left us a cathedral in stone, there are those who hold that the writings of George Borrow are hardly less monumental in their way. Not that the Bible Society alone was the target of his wit; there was the incident retold in *Lavengro*, for example, when a deputation had called upon John Borrow in connection with the painting of a mayoral portrait. Borrow had lamented the death of Crome, who would, he thought, have been a better man for the job. "Crome," was the retort, "yes, he was a clever man, a very clever man in his way; he was good at painting landscapes and farmhouses, but he would not do in the present instance if he were alive. He had no conception of the heroic, sir. We want some person capable of representing our mayor standing under the Norman arch of the cathedral"!



The Bishop's Palace, Norwich
1814

On the whole, the lack of conception of the heroic did not appear to be peculiar to Crome; at any rate John Borrow did not feel sufficiently heroic to tackle the figure of "a mighty portly man, with a bull's head, black hair, body like a dray horse . . ." in juxtaposition to the Cathedral's Norman arch. Poor hard-up Haydon, however, jumped at the opportunity—and the £100 it brought—opining that "a mayor is a mayor, and there is something grand in that idea of a Norman arch."

West Front, Norwich.

The father of George and John Borrow was a Captain in the Norfolk Militia, and when in 1819 he was pensioned off it was in Norwich that he elected to end his days. The family had already lived for two or three years in the little house in King's Court, Willow Lane, which has in our own time been converted into a Borrow Museum; and Mrs. Borrow continued to live here for fifteen years after her husband died. John, the elder boy, had first attended the Grammar School at the Erpingham Gate; subsequently he studied painting under Old Crome, and in the opinion of his

brother, at any rate, he would have made a name for himself in art had he been blessed with half the energy and persistence of the younger Borrow. As it was, he emigrated to America and there fell a victim to fever.

When the Borrows settled down in Norwich in 1816 it was the turn of George to attend the Grammar School, and the lad who had delighted in the changeful life his father's calling had imposed upon the family found little charm in the discipline of the schoolroom. His one consolation was in languages, and his ready acquisition of French and Italian soon made him a firm friend of at least one master. But probably his general attitude to schools was well epitomized in the incident in which he, with three companions, decided to run away. In later years one of his contemporaries wrote of the escapade:

"The four of them determined to run away and turn pirates. John Dalrymple carried an old horse pistol and some potatoes as his contribution to the general stock, but his zeal was soon exhausted and he turned back at Thorpe Lunatic Asylum. Borrow went off to Yarmouth, however, and lived on the Caister Denes for a few days."

In 1819 George was articled to a firm of lawyers in Tuck's Court, but the law took a secondary place in his sympathies, and his love and mastery of languages was finding an outlet in literature. So soon as he had served his term in the lawyer's office he was off to London to begin that extraordinary series of translations and journalistic enterprises. Then, at last, came the need of the Bible Society for someone capable of translating the Bible into Manchu. Borrow didn't know a word of Manchu, but so little did he regard that as an

obstacle that he walked all the way to London, interviewed representatives of the Society, returned to Willow Lane, Norwich, and from that address wrote, no more than six months later, "I have mastered Manchu"! Truly he had the gift of tongues!

In Clement Shorter's excellent little book on Borrow there appears an amusing passage concerning the respective mannerisms of the Society and of their new interpreter. "He was not," wrote C.K.S., "at first at home in the precise measure of unction required by his new friends. Borrow had spoken of the prospect of becoming 'useful to the Deity, to man and to himself.' 'Doubtless you meant,' commented Jowett, 'the prospect of glorifying God,' and Jowett frankly tells him that his tone of confidence in speaking of himself 'had alarmed some of the excellent members of our committee.'"

THE ERPINGHAM GATE, NORWICH.

Literature and religion are blended in another manner in the writings of an earlier Norwich resident—Sir Thomas Browne, who settled here in 1637, when he was thirty-two years of age. His *Religio Medici* is different indeed from *The Bible in Spain*, but in Norwich one is as little likely to forget Borrow as to overlook Browne. Like many another book that has achieved fame, *Religio Medici* was written without

serious thoughts concerning publication, and the first edition was issued without the author's permission. Subsequently an authorized edition was brought out, and even to-day many delight in the "musings of a man of simple faith on the things of spiritual life and the mysteries of the unseen." You may remember how Evelyn paid a visit to Sir Thomas, finding "his whole house and garden a cabinet of rarities, and that of the best collections, especially medals, plants, books and natural things." And you may remember, too, how Evelyn was taken by his host on a ramble through Norwich: "this ancient citty, being one of the largest and certainly, after London, one of the noblest in England."

Sir Thomas Browne was buried in the fine church of St. Peter Mancroft, which overlooks the Market Place. His grave was accidentially found in 1840 by some workmen, and his skull was seized and placed in the Museum of the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital. Recently, and very rightly, it has been returned to its resting-place in the church; and very appropriately might Sir Thomas's own words be recalled, "Who knows the fate of his bones, or how often he is to be buried?"

St. Peter Mancroft dates from the fifteenth century and possesses a splendid tower which has the advantage of being so placed that one can see it and admire its proportions. Many of our best towers are so hedged about with buildings and narrow, tortuous streets that it is wellnigh impossible to appreciate them properly. An instance of this crowding is to be found by walking a few steps down Exchange Street from the Market Place and then to the left along Pottergate Street, where is the church of St. John, Maddermarket, with

St. Peter Mancroft, Norwich
1816

PUBLIC LIB

a tower so cramped for space that its base has been arched to allow a thoroughfare to pass beneath.

On the other side of Exchange Street is a church which receives a number of visits from Americans on account of a memorial to one Abraham Lincolne, who, however, cannot have been more than a very distant connection of *the* Abraham Lincoln. This notwithstanding, the memorial is freely sought out, and a former rector told I. C. Hannah that "he once saw a negro prostrate before it as though it were a holy shrine." Yet the Lincolns did hail from the neighbourhood, as we shall presently see.

Whatever the doubts and speculations concerning the Lincoln tablet, there is none—or should be none —with regard to another in the same church which commemorates Sir John Suckling—*not* the poet, but his father. Suckling House, in Bridewell, takes its name from a still earlier member of the family—one Robert, who was Mayor of the city in 1572.

St. Andrew's Hall is known far beyond the confines of Norwich. Originally the nave of a Dominican church built in the fifteenth century, it now forms a favourite hall for local gatherings. It has a fine hammer-beam roof of chestnut and the walls are adorned with portraits by Gainsborough, Opie, Hoppner, Beechey and others.

But an even finer possession of Norwich in the way of halls is the Guildhall itself, built early in the fifteenth century, its exterior boasting some admirable flintwork and its inside elaborately decorated with carved woodwork, stained-glass windows and portraits. The Guildhall, however, is away back in the Market Place, and it may be better to pay instead a visit to the Stranger's Hall, close at hand in Charing Cross. This is one of

the most delightful old houses to which the public has easy access, and its interest has been heightened by its conversion into a "Folk Museum"—an idea, by the way, that might more frequently be copied elsewhere. Here is gorgeous Chippendale and Hepplewhite furniture, displayed—not in a plate-glass-windowed, marble-floored hall—but in the intimacy of rooms whose every wall bears traces of loving craftsmanship. The staircase is alone worth a visit.

THE STRANGER'S HALL, NORWICH

Lovers of literature will also not omit to pay a visit to the Public Library, also close at hand in St. Andrew's Street, for Norwich boasts the proud distinction of possessing the oldest public library with a continuous history to our own time. The collection played no small part in the early career of George Borrow, and for that alone we may be thankful to the civic fathers who founded the library in 1608.

Borrow, indeed, owed not a little to the friends and influences he encountered in Norwich; and it is interesting in this connection to recall that no less a force than Sir Walter Scott acknowledged his indebtedness to a Norwich man—William Taylor, who translated, among other things, Gottfried Burger's ballad *Lenore*. In Scott's own words, "It was this that made me a

poet. I had several times attempted the more regular kinds of poetry without success, but here was something that I thought I could do."

William Taylor, by the way, was in no way related to the family of Norwich Taylors, of whom it was said that they reversed the proverb that it took nine tailors to make a man, and of which the most interesting member was Mrs. John Taylor, "the Madam Roland of Norwich." We are indebted to Lucy Aiken for the picture of this lady "darning her boy's worsted stockings while holding her own with Southey, Brougham or Macintosh."

Most interesting and remarkable of the Norwich families who have influenced the life of our time were the Gurneys. The father of the most important generation of that family was the John Gurney who towards the end of the eighteenth century set up home at Earlham Hall, just outside Norwich, and who, although a staunch Quaker, possessed such a magnificent team of black horses that the Bishop was wont to borrow them on important occasions, the horses from the episcopal stables being engaged meanwhile in trotting the Gurneys to the Friends' Meeting House! At Earlham, as the late Clement Shorter says, "that family of eleven children grew up. Not one but has an interesting history, which is recorded by Augustus Hare and other writers. Elizabeth, the fourth daughter, married Joseph Fry and as Elizabeth Fry attained to a world-wide fame as a prison reformer. Hannah married Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton of Slave Trade Abolition; Richenda the Rev. Francis Cunningham, who sent George Borrow upon his career; while Louisa married Samuel Hoare of Hampstead." Not the least of the great and good works in which this

family took a hand was the British and Foreign Bible Society. Many of its early meetings were held at the Gurneys' house at Earlham, while Cunningham's introduction of Borrow produced results which were possibly unexpected but which certainly made for the fame of the Society.

As inevitably as the name of Norwich is coupled with that of Borrow, so the pair of them are coupled with that of Mousehold Heath, made famous by the paintings of John Crome—"Old Crome." Reading *Lavengro* for the sake of "the wind on the heath," you will have come across Borrow's tribute to Crome, in the passage in which he addresses the brother who, instead of applying himself to his art, went to America, as already stated. "He has painted, not pictures of the world, but English pictures such as Gainsborough might have done; beautiful rural pieces, with trees which might well tempt the wild birds to perch upon them: . . . Nor need thou even go to London, the big city, in search of a master, for thou hast one at home in the old East Anglian town, who can instruct thee while thou needest instruction. Better stay at home, brother, at least for a season, and toil and strive 'midst groanings and despondency till thou hast attained excellence even as he has done—a little dark man with the brown coat and the top boots, whose name will one day be considered the chief ornament of the old town, and whose work will at no distant period rank among the proudest pictures of England—and England against the world! Thy master, my brother, thy, at present, all too-little considered master—Crome."

Crome and Cotman, both of whom painted the Heath in varying moods, were the founders of the Norwich

School of painters—" the link between the Dutch seventeenth-century landscape painters and the French impressionists." The school still flourishes exceedingly, as may be seen from a visit to the Castle Museum ; where also are some of A. J. Munnings's delightful studies of horses and some good examples of the genius of Arnesby Brown. But the best example of Crome is to be found in the National Gallery.

The Heath has probably acquired a more " suburban" look since Borrow and Petulengo gossiped on the sweetness of life and " the wind on the heath," but it is still one of the best places from which to look upon Norwich. " Gazing from the heights the eye beholds venerable houses, numerous gardens, thrice twelve churches, mighty mound, grey old castle, a fine old City truly."

Mousehold Heath will ever be associated with the tragic rebellion of the Norfolk peasantry under the Ketts of Wymondham in the sixteenth century. The rights and wrongs of the rising have often been canvassed, but the consensus of opinion seems to lean towards the Ketts. It were inevitable that any undertaking so organized should number among its recruits a large proportion of ne'er-do-wells, and as inevitable that in the absence of firm discipline these ragamuffins should get out of hand and by bringing discredit upon the insurgent band cloud the real issue. Kett and his followers made their demands clear in the petition they forwarded to the King, and the principal of which was the abolition of " enclosures." As an instance of his sympathy with the movement, Kett had given them permission to tear down railings he had erected round certain common lands in the neighbourhood of

Wymondham, and so he was persuaded to become the leader of the movement. He (Richard) was joined by his brother William, also of Wymondham, and the force moved off to Mousehold Heath, where they made their headquarters and where Kett made reply to the King's promise of pardon if they would disperse: "Kings," he said, "are wont to pardon wicked persons, not innocent and just men. We have done nothing to deserve such pardon and have been guilty of no crime."

The boast was followed by a descent upon Norwich, which was soon in the hands of Kett and his merry men. They were not left in possession for long, for the Earl of Northampton came marching up and the rebels thought fit to retire again to Mousehold Heath. No sooner were they arrived there, however, than they decided once more to attack the city, which they accordingly did and, despite heavy bloodshed on both sides, they again carried the day.

The movement was becoming a serious menace. Lowestoft, as we have seen in an earlier chapter, had been raided, and Yarmouth attacked. It was time for stern measures, and no less a leader than the Earl of Warwick was deputed to restore order.

This he did. . . . But at what a cost! Froude wrote: "For three miles the rebels strewed the Heath with their bodies; 3,500 were cut down." The Ketts were captured—Robert to be hanged from the walls of Norwich Castle and his brother William from the tower of the church at Wymondham. Yet another sad memory gathers round the Kett rebellion, for among the staff of the Earl of Warwick was Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, who in the course of the Kett rebellion spent a night at Stanfield Hall, where

Windmill, Mousehold Heath
Crome

he met the daughter of the house—the unfortunate Amy Robsart.

> Caister was a city when Norwich was none,
> And Norwich was built of Caister stone.

Such couplets are not uncommon in Norfolk—thus the former relationship between Lynn and Rising has been commemorated, for instance—but about three miles southward from Norwich are earthworks which at least suggest that the Norwich-Caister couplet is founded on very substantial fact.

Caister, or Caister St. Edmunds, to give its full name, is now a quiet little village, but in Roman times it seems to have been a fairly busy market town—*Venta Icenorum;* the latter half of the name linking it with the Icenii. Not a few archæological lances have been broken in connection with the exact function of *Venta Icenorum*—whether a military station, or whether merely a country town. Space will not permit the printing of even half the pros and cons, but one may perhaps quote the excellent summary printed in the *Victoria County History*. "There is no reason to call Caister a Roman place of arms. No military remains have ever been found there. Its modern name, though derived through Anglo-Saxon from the Latin *castra*, does not prove it to have been a fortress, while its Romano-British name indicates rather that it was a small country town, like Venta Belgarum or Venta Silurum, and its area and remains harmonize with such a view. The evidence of coins further suggests that its Roman life commenced during the last twenty or thirty years of the first century, while the round towers of its walls show that it was fortified at the end of the third century or during the fourth, like

many other country towns in Britain or Northern Gaul."

Of the remains above referred to, the principal are the great fragments of walls on the west and north sides of the rectangle enclosing Caister, and the enormous earthen mounds on the other two sides. The enclosure extends back almost a quarter of a mile from the river front and measures rather less from north to south.

Norwich may, according to the couplet, have been built of Caister stone, but Caister Church bears more evident traces of the quarry. It stands within the enclosure, and as you sink gratefully into one of its seats you may profitably muse on all the changes which have overtaken the site since the days when figures of Diana and Bacchus here commanded reverence. At Yarmouth we have seen England's largest parish church ; at Keswick, four miles south-west of Norwich, is a tiny building which is among those claiming the distinction of being the smallest. It consists merely of a tall round tower, such as is frequently seen in Suffolk, and attached to the tower is a church so diminutive that a congregation of more than a dozen would, one imagines, fill the house.

On The Broads.

CHAPTER V

THE BROADS

IN my younger days a holiday on the Broads was something of an adventure. One went clad in more or less immaculate flannels and with a gaily beribboned "blazer," the whole outfit being crowned by that abominable hat, most inappropriately labelled a "boater." For amusement on "off" days books, banjos and sketching materials were taken, or cameras by those who liked them—the coming of the "snap-shot" camera did to some extent relieve the world of some appalling "studies" in water-colour and pencil. In anticipation of halts by the wayside, cricket bats and balls were taken, and, incredible as it may seem to the young Bettys of to-day, tennis rackets and balls *and nets* were taken—and not merely taken but actually used whenever a sufficiently smooth field was discovered. And, most astonishing of all, perhaps, the games played in such conditions were actually enjoyed!

Nowadays a holiday on the Broads is far less an adventure, thanks to the manner in which the caterers and agents undertake to arrange everything, including

the running of the motor-boat. Moreover, the solitude of the Broads is too frequently shattered by catcalls and jazz music, even, or especially, at the midnight hour, when one might reasonably expect a little peacefulness, moored miles from towns. I am not among those who profess a scene ruined if any other party than their own is in sight, but I do think that the present generation are fast losing sight of the essential charm of the Broads. They are fine spreads of water; ideal for thrashing motor-boats and all kinds of larks and pranks, but they have peculiar charms of scenery and atmosphere which it would be a thousand pities to shatter, and it is to be hoped that the motor-boat will not entirely supersede the sailing craft.

The Broads district is popularly regarded as being enclosed on the south by the Waveney and the Yare as they flow between Norwich and Lowestoft, on the north-east by the coast and on the north-west by a line drawn north-eastward from Norwich to Happisburgh. Actually, the majority of the Broads cluster in the much smaller area marked on the south by the Bure as it flows from Yarmouth to Wroxham and on the north by a line drawn eastward from Stalham to the coast; and it is this latter district which will be dealt with in this chapter, Oulton, Rockland and Surlingham having been noticed in a previous chapter.

The first dozen miles of the Bure from Yarmouth are notable principally for their curves and the succession of "Mile Houses"—the intervening reaches not necessarily measuring 1760 yards each, since the houses were built without much thought of their distance from Yarmouth. Making our way thus upstream, we soon experience one feature of Broadland holidays

—the silence (unless, of course, we are chugging along in a motor-boat). The gentlest swishing of the reeds, the slapping of the wavelets against the bows of the boat, the clank of the many windmills and occasionally—in heavier weather—the distant thunder of the sea as it throws itself on the wild shore from Caister round to Happisburgh. Birds there are, too, of course: gulls and curlews in profusion, and less rarely heard—and seen—the grebe, with his graceful crest; the lordly heron; partridges, and pheasants; woodcock and snipe in their season; nightingales—which do *not* wait until darkness has fallen ere beginning their song—and a hundred others known to the ornithologist.

Frequently one hears of parties making their way *down* the Bure to Yarmouth, but I cannot help thinking this a mistake. The final dozen miles of that river are not the most attractive, and are certainly better taken at the outset, while there is yet a certain amount of bustle aboard anent such matters as storing the provisions—and checking them—and in making out the various lists of duties, if that has not already been done.

Even so it is probable that Stokesby will be hailed as a suitable place for a halt, and it is a good place from which to make a cross-country jaunt to the isolated trio of Broads comprising Filby, Rollesby and Ormesby. Stokesby Church, by the way, has a sanctuary knocker that is worth seeing, as well as one or two other features—bench ends, a chest, and so on. It is not an inappropriate moment to recall, too, that the earliest records of cider-making in England are connected with Stokesby, the lordships of Reedham and Stokesby being early in the thirteenth

century held by the Petty Sergeantry by the tenure of paying yearly on Michaelmas Day 200 Pearmain apples and four hogshead of wine made from Pearmains. Although cider-making traditions are generally connected with the West, quite a considerable quantity of cider is brewed in Norfolk.

The trio of broads we are about to visit is connected with the Bure by the small and appropriately named Muck Fleet. Filby, Ormesby and Rollesby Broads are well known to Yarmouth visitors, being easily reached by the road which marks the border between Ormesby and Rollesby and serves the famous old "Eel's Foot" Inn. From the pretty little landing stage by the bridge, Ormesby looks very lovely on a warm summer morning, when a slight haze hangs over the water and the trees beyond appear almost nebulous. Like all other Broads, Ormesby is very shallow, and by choosing your position carefully you can sit quietly in your boat and watch the fish darting about in the clear water. Mooring, by the way, is not done by anchors on the Broads—not, at any rate, for fishing boats. The proper way is by means of quants, or poles, one at each end of the boat; but at least as frequently I have found a 28-lb. weight at the end of the rope tied respectively to the stem and stern of the boat. Astonishing catches are made, too, though it is a pity that lack of consideration leads casual visitors to take the scores of fish that are often landed and to carry them off to their Yarmouth lodgings—quite useless, many of them—instead of returning them at once to the water. There is, of course, a list of "minimum sizes," but even a fish which easily passes the minimum may not be worth taking away, and rather than being

thrown on the bank it should be returned to the water.

The plenitude of fish life in these waters has to be seen to be believed, and before special legislation was introduced enormous catches used to be made by poacher gangs armed with nets, the fish taken often, it is said, weighing "tons." And to-day at Yarmouth, Lowestoft and other fishing centres on the East Coast the herrings are taken actually in tons: yet transport and other problems frequently render an entire catch valueless, and the fish are used as manure instead of forming a cheap and nutritious food for thousands of town dwellers. With so much poverty among the inhabitants of our cities, it certainly seems anomalous that along this coast food should be thrown to rot, while it is yet profitable to fetch the carcase of a sheep from the other side of the world!

A very pleasant way of observing the fish-life is by means of a water-telescope, which is merely a tube designed to cut off the reflections from the surface. They are easily made, either cylindrical or rectangular in section and from a foot to eighteen inches in length. They can be of wood or metal; if of wood steps should be taken against warping. The lower end of the "telescope" should be closed with a piece of clear glass, carefully fitted so that when that end of the box is inserted in the water the inside keeps quite dry.

In Ormesby you will find great numbers of rudd—a kind of cross between a roach and a bream; and if, when fishing, you bring up one rudd you may rest assured you will soon have a can full; almost my first experience of Broadland fishing was among the

rudd of Ormesby, and I still remember the amazement with which I beheld the swarm of fish below the boat. Many a time since as I plied a seemingly useless rod on other waters I have remembered the day we became tired—actually tired—of pulling up time after time, with no attempt at striking or skill, plump rudd on Ormesby!

When, many years ago, Mr. Suffling visited this corner of Broadland, he observed over the door of a cottage in Rollesby village the sign "A Pall to let." "Such a thing as a hearse is unknown at a village funeral, as the body is either borne on the shoulders of relatives or conveyed in a cart. The pall is therefore let out, and does duty for all the villages in the immediate neighbourhood."

Beyond Stokesby the Bure takes on a prettier aspect, and at Acle the bridge has quite a picturesque appeal. The road from Acle to Yarmouth must be one of the straightest stretches in the kingdom; how relentlessly straight only those know who have toiled along it on a "push-bike" in the teeth of a brisk easterly wind!

Uneventfully the Bure carries us northward another three miles or so to the mouth of the little river Thurne, by which you reach another outlying trio of Broads—Hickling, Heigham Sound and Whiteslea Mere, in reality one continuous waterway, and a happy hunting-ground of sailing men on that account. Hickling is, in fact, the largest of all the Broads; a feature it contrives, so the wags assert, only by its excessive shallowness. So shallow is it, in fact, that there is a joke to the effect that should an incautious voyager draw a bucket of water from the broad he is liable by so doing to leave his boat stranded!

Hickling is illustrative of a current fallacy concerning the Broads—that they are great expanses of water over which one may sail or motor to the heart's content. Unfortunately, they are not; most of the Broads are exceedingly shallow in relation to their area, and in anything drawing more water than a canoe it is desirable to keep to the withy-marked "lanes" unless you wish to be "stuck in the mud"—and with no returning tide to float you off!

This question of tide is important to the visitor in another connection, since it has been successfully argued that those Broads unaffected by rise and fall of tide may be fenced off as private preserves. Many and bitter are the controversies waged on the question of public use of the Broads, but in each case the test of tide has carried the day.

The "capital" of this corner of Broadland is Potter Heigham, though the village is nearly a mile away from the river, and the Potter Heigham known to the sailing man clusters around the old bridge: the picturesqueness of which is emphasized by the iron-girder railway bridge further along. In addition to Hickling, Whiteslea and Heigham, there are within reach Horsey Mere and Martham Broad, and a mile beyond them you come to the bare desolate sand-hills lining the coast, where you may have a day "off" from the Broads, bathing, lazing among the sands and watching the myriad rabbits and hearing little but the ceaseless fret of the ocean on the strand. "It is on sand alone that the sea strikes its true music," wrote George Borrow, with the significant addition—"Norfolk sand," and if you spend many days floating on the adjacent Broads or rambling along the curious, forgotten-looking lanes that so often are

more important on the map than in reality, you will have ample opportunity to test the quality of the music which so impressed Borrow.

So quiet is the country hereabouts that the sea makes itself heard far inland at times. In fury it pounds the sands, endeavouring to break a way through to the flat land beyond the dunes, and on more than one occasion it has nearly succeeded. And with the sea comes its ally the wind, whirling the sand aloft in clouds. Man's greatest ally along this coast has been the unlovely marram grass, which, with its exceedingly long roots, binds the sand into something approaching a solid mass that is able to resist wind and waves and to form a stout sea-wall. Waxham, Palling, Eccles, all have tales to tell of the fury of the enemy: of Eccles, indeed, it may be said that the sea has obliterated it, for all that is left are a few remains of the tower of its church, which long stood a solitary memorial of the vanished village but was blown down in 1895.

HAPPISBURGH.

Happisburgh—or Hazeboro' as it is rendered and pronounced locally—is suffering from the furious onslaughts of the sea, but the Hazeboro' we now look upon is, as it were, a second generation, for the original site—or was there yet an earlier town?—stood north-eastward of its modern successor. Over its foundations the waves now roll, but from time to time there come to the surface wrought stones and other relics of the old town.

It all sounds—and is—very dreadful, and one might

expect to find the inhabitants of this part of Norfolk going about with long and gloomy faces, and with eyes ever fixed fearfully upon the sea. But the only long face I have seen in the Happisburgh neighbourhood, in recent years, at any rate, was intimately connected with the unexpectedly long time taken by a certain horse to cover the old course on the South Denes at Yarmouth. This is certainly not a pessimist colony!

We have strayed somewhat from the main artery of Broadland, but in many ways the tract of land and water between Potter Heigham and the sea is most attractive.

On the return journey down the Thurne there will be noticed perhaps in the right bank the dyke leading to the pretty little broad of Womack—now, alas, almost entirely reed-grown—beyond which a glimpse may be caught of Ludham village. The church of Ludham is well worth visiting for the sake of its screen, still retaining traces of the original colouring. By searching very closely the inscription on one of the rails "Made in the yer of ower lord god 1496" may be deciphered. Ludham was for some time connected with the wealthy Abbey of St. Benet's, and on the Dissolution the Bishops of Norwich converted part of the buildings formerly belonging to the Abbots into an episcopal palace, adding a little brick chapel, long since, however, converted to farm uses.

St. Benet's Abbey is the first object of note on the journey up the Bure from Thurne mouth.

A few graceful arches and pieces of wall are all that is left of the priory founded here over nine hundred years ago by Canute, and it is unfortunate that these

scanty remains should be spoiled by the ugly ruins of the mill built there during last century. The priory was occupied by Black Friars of the Order of St. Benedict, and very soon after their installation they had to give an account of themselves at the call of the Conqueror. The story goes that they withstood so well a siege of several days that the attacking Normans had to resort to treachery to gain admittance. The Judas of the flock was found and promised the abbacy if he would but admit the besiegers to the Priory. This he did. True to their promise, the Normans duly invested him as Abbot of the Priory of St. Benet's-at-Holme—and then promptly hanged him for his treachery.

The ruins of the Priory make a very pretty sight as we drift past, and more than one camping party has been tempted to pitch tents here. Curiously the place seems to have been regarded as a kind of health resort in days when but little attention was paid generally to such matters, for one of the Paston letters reports "My Lady of Yorke and all her howsold is here at Sent Benett's and purpose to abide there stille til the kynge come from beyonde the see, and longer if she like the eyre ther as it is seide."

That the place was of considerable importance is also to be gathered from the fact that the abbey church was the burial-place of Sir John Fastolff, the powerful friend of the Pastons and the builder of Caister Castle.

Further indication of the ancient wealth of the Abbey is to be gathered from the fact that it was exchanged by Henry VIII for the twenty-three manors, seventy-three livings, ten palaces, and the first fruits and all the knights' fees belonging to the See of

Norwich. Henry had peculiar ideas concerning bargains, of course, but it is clear that St. Benet's must have been a place of considerable worth for such an exchange to appear even plausible.

One curious and interesting result of the transaction is that the Bishop of Norwich is also Abbot of St. Benet's-at-Holme—the only abbot in the Church of England; as such he has a double claim to his seat in the House of Lords, since Abbots, like Bishops, were automatically entitled to a seat, and the abbacy of St. Benet's has never been dissolved.

Beyond St. Benet's the Bure follows a relatively straight course for nearly a mile—a proceeding almost unprecedented so far as our present experience teaches; but on investigation the mystery is quickly out. The reach of the river going north-westward from St. Benet's is an artificial cut: the original course of the river being, far more characteristically, by the deep loop from which the Fleet Dike leads to South Walsham Broad, a charming little place, set amid graceful trees. South Walsham is a very different place from the far bigger and busier North Walsham. It is notable as being one of those places where two churches share the same churchyard. Here, as elsewhere, the popular explanation is that the buildings were erected in rivalry by two spinsters: and here, as elsewhere, the statement must be accepted *cum grano*.

Having landed to visit South Walsham we may very well, before embarking once more, stroll north-westward to pretty little Ranworth, with a broad that is accessible from the Bure only by small boats, and a church that is visited from near and far on account of its fine screen. On the authority of the

Society of Antiquaries "the magnificent painted rood screen and reredoses to the nave altars form a composition which is unequalled by any now existing in a district famous for its screens. . . . There is nothing to equal it in England: for richness of detail it is unsurpassed. The beautiful diapers on the robes of the saints and apostles painted on the panels, and the elaborate flower work which adds to and heightens the effect of the architectural features, make the whole composition suggestive of a great initial page of some splendidly illumined manuscript." A very pleasing bit of imagery that, and it is pleasing to be able to record that this fine "initial page" has suffered hardly at all from officious "restoration."

Two unusual features are also found in Ranworth Church—the pulley over which the chain of the sanctuary lamp passed as the lamp was raised and lowered, and a curious reading-desk on which is carved a Latin chant, the air being indicated in the old square-topped notes.

To the man who dearly loves to lash his helm and let the boat make its own way across some great stretch of water such as Oulton Broad, one may well say, with the prophet, "Go to the Ant, thou sluggard!" for helm-lashing tricks lead to all kinds of trouble if persisted in, while a few hours on the Ant will give the amateur yachtsman quite a surprising amount of tuition in handling his boat.

A mile or so from the Bure the steep-humped Ludham Bridge is reached, less narrow than it looks, though it is by no means too wide for much of the traffic which passes through on the way to or from Barton; indeed, it is related with every appearance of veracity that some years ago a persistent party of

holiday-makers squeezed their boat through with so little spare room that when, a few days later, they returned, in heavy rain, it was found that the swelling of the timbers owing to the wetting was sufficient to make it impossible to bring the boat through the bridge, push and tug as the crew might! After a week or so of moist weather the sun again shone on the hapless crew, their boat resumed its former slimness and—with only a slight sacrifice of paint—was manœuvred through.

Quite close to the river near the entry to Barton Broad is the little church of Irstead, boasting a connection with William of Wykeham, though whether he was ever resident here during his office as rector is doubtful, to say the least. The church has some old bench-ends and is quite worth seeing.

It is noticeable how many of these Broadland churches are roofed with thatch—not the straw thatch of other parts of our land, but the characteristic coarse reed thatch of East Anglia. If you are fortunate you may see a true Norfolk thatcher at work, and he is worth watching in this age of machines and mass-production. He uses but one simple tool, known as a leggat and consisting merely of a square piece of board with a handle. The first process in laying the thatch is to weave and wattle a proportion of reeds through the roof slats. Then the thatcher lays on the foundation bundle after bundle of long reeds, their thicker ends down. The bundle having been carefully fastened down with a thin wand of hazel, the real artistry of the work begins to appear, the leggat is brought into use. Most carefully the reeds are patted into position until they look as if they had been planed to make the smooth eave that

is half the charm of a good thatch. Of the hundred-and-one little touches that are revealed as this true artist proceeds with his task there is not space to tell; it must suffice to counsel you to stay awhile and watch the next Norfolk thatcher you espy at work.

The first sensation on seeing Barton will possibly be one of disappointment, and you may be inclined to ask whether it was worth wriggling up the Ant for this not over-interesting waterway. But make your way farther north and any repining will quickly disappear as the marshy banks of the river are replaced by graceful groves of trees casting their reflections in the still water of the Broad. Barton is exceedingly shallow, and it is desirable to keep to the "beaten" track.

Seen from a goodly distance around on account of its site on a slight eminence—in these flat regions it looms almost mountainous—is the church of Barton. Here is another of the fine screens for which the county is famous. There is also a remarkable brass, inscribed in an informal fashion, that manages to strike an unwonted note of sincerity:

> Here are laid under this stone in the cley
> Thomas Amyss and his wife Margery.
> Sometime we were as you now be,
> And as we be, after this so shall ye.
> Of the goods as God had the said Thomas lent
> Did make this chapel of a good intent.
> Wherefore they desire of you that be
> To pray for them to the last eternity.
> I beseach all people far and ner
> To praye for me Thomas Amys heartily.
> Which gave a mesbooke and made this chapel here,
> And a suit of blew damask also gave I.

Of God 1511 and 5 yere
I the said Thomas deceased verily,
And the 4th day of August was buried here
On whose soul God have mercy.

Apart from its workmanship the screen is notable as commemorating two saints not often remembered: if, indeed, they are remembered at all. One, St. Zita, is of especial interest to the ladies, since she is the patron saint of housekeepers and she is shown carrying keys; the other would very frequently be invoked were her speciality more generally known, for she is St. Appolonia, who would bring—with her pincers—relief to those suffering the pangs of tooth-ache.

The Ant continues from the northern end of Barton Broad to Stalham or Sutton Broad, which, like the snakes in Ireland, are not. The map does indeed show a fair-sized piece of water here, but it is doubtful if you would recognize the reed-crowded area as a Broad.

Stalham town, a short walk from the staithe, will probably be of principal interest on account of its facilities for replenishing stores, but while ashore it is worth walking a mile or so beyond Stalham for the sake of the splendid church at Ingham. The lines and proportions of this fourteenth-century building would put many a modern building to shame, for all that it is hidden away in the country. It owed much to the lords of the manor, one of whom Edward II appointed Seneschal Constable of Bordeaux and of Gascoigne. This same Sir Oliver made the church collegiate in connection with a priory of "St. Mary, the Holy Trinity and St. Victor for the redemption of captives from the Turks." The tombs of Sir

Oliver Ingham and of Sir Roger and the Lady Margaret de Bois are noticeable, and the epitaph-hunter may find, near the west end of the church, the following inscription on a gravestone:

JOHN AMIES, 1831

Here lies an honest independent man,
Boast more ye great ones if you can.
I have been kicked by bull and ram
Now let me lay contented as I am.

Our boat not having swelled since we scraped through Ludham Bridge on the cruise up the Ant, we may quickly return to the broader Bure and resume our interrupted journey towards Aylsham. If the boat *should* stick under Ludham Bridge you may care to take the opportunity for a walk "across country" to pretty little Horning. Even if the boat comes through the bridge easily it is not a bad plan to stroll over by land and let the boat take the more roundabout waterway. Horning Ferry is a favourite gathering-place for fishermen and sailing men—not forgetting those who make their progress in motor-boats. There is a pretty little inn, and the surrounding country has a welcome proportion of good trees. Horning Street is situated a mile or so farther up stream, at a point where the Bure makes one of the sharpest of its many sharp bends. It is a pleasant little corner, and you will not find the time hang heavily as you wait for the boat to come round from the tortuous Ant.

Soon as we journey upstream we come to the Hoveton Broads, favourite breeding grounds for gulls, during which season they are hardly the quietest of these waterways! They are, however, exceedingly

pretty, but prettiest of all the Broads is neighbouring Wroxham.

For those unable to give the time to a lengthy cruise, yet desirous of bringing away the fairest impression of the district, Wroxham is unhesitatingly to be recommended. Apart from its beautiful setting —of which more anon—it is always lively with boats of all kinds, the slim electric launch competing with the stately wherry for our interest, a pair of anglers, glorying in their old clothes and care-free appearance, contrasting strangely with a merry crew of girls clad in the entirely suitable garb that fashion has produced during the past few years. Best of all is Wroxham seen during its regatta ; one of the liveliest on the Broads. Then indeed you may see the turn of speed that can be produced from a wherry ; then, too, you may be astonished to find how cleverly some of these girl-crews can handle their craft.

The charm of Wroxham scenery consists to some extent in its contrasts. " On the eastern side there are reed beds, low coppices, rank and tangled vegetation and spacious marsh and lake and river, with always a warm flush of colour "—the scenery typical of the lower reaches of the Bure, in fact. But on the western shore of the Broad are trees, " all the accompaniments of quiet rural English scenery." It is Mr. Christopher Davis whom I have been quoting, and he continues : " The freshness of the spring is doubled by the reflection in the still water ; the glow of summer is mellowed by the quivering haze from the broad ; the glories of autumn gather intensity from their mixture in the palette of the lake ; and the pale yellow of the dying reeds is in the brief sunshine of winter brightened into gold. In all its aspects

the broad has a charm which is irresistible, but greatest, we think, when the silence of the night enfolds it; when the stars shine below and above, and the noises of the night, of birds and fish, alone break the stillness. It has not the eerie loneliness of the wilder broads, but a soft restful quiet which is a sure medicine for a restless mind."

Wroxham for that reason is an excellent starting-place for a cruise, especially for those unused to camping out, to whom the almost intense loneliness of some of the more open broads is rather frightening on the first night. Not so at Wroxham: in fact the probabilities are that during late July or August the Broad will be found too thickly populated—unless tastes lean to such items as midnight jazz!

From Wroxham onwards our journey up-Bure is increasingly lovely. The trees seem to take on an added stateliness. Wroxham town is only a mile westward of the Broad, but the boat has to travel almost thrice that distance before coming abreast of it on the west, and those inclined for a little pedestrian exercise may leave the boat at the bridge and either walk to the village or, if it is not designed to halt there, tramp westward to Belaugh, where eventually the boat will turn up after threading the prodigious loop the river has thrown around the diminutive Belaugh Broad.

There is an amusing reference to Belaugh in the correspondence of some of Dowsing's confrères. After alluding to "the scandalous minister at Belaugh and his unpurged mass-house" the correspondent proceeds: "Master Sherwood (the clerk), albeit his fasts, is bulky, and was fain to leave his cloak and baldrick at a dwelling below the hill whereon Belagh steeple house standeth, perked like one of the idolatrous

high places of Israel. And this also reeketh foully of superstition. . . . King Edward of pious memory brake down the Virgin Mary with Christ in her arms in the place prelatics call the chancell: the screen hath twelve apostles, their faces rubbed out by a goodly trooper from Hobbies"; and the letter finishes almost with a sob, "But oh, Master Tofts, the loft yet standeth."

There is little calling for special remark during the cruise up to Aylsham, which is discussed on a later page.

Coltishall is the next town. It is a venerable place which received a charter so long ago as 1231 in which the following privileges were conferred: "To all men, women, or children born, or to be born, in this my town of Coltishall (so Henry II) freedom from all villainage of body and blood and from toll, stallage, picage and pannage, in all fairs and markets throughout England; and that all frays, transgressions, bargains, quarrels and suits concerning the said town of Coltishall shall be determined twice every year, before the King's officers, at the leets there."

CROMER.

CHAPTER VI

CROMER AND POPPYLAND

GOOD wine, we know, needs no bush, but it is interesting to speculate what the present state of Cromer would have been but for the co-operation of the old Great Eastern Railway and the *Daily Telegraph*. Cromer, fifty years ago, was merely a fishing village. The railway came no nearer than Norwich, and the rest of the journey had to be made by coach. Nevertheless, perceptive holiday-makers did go there, and the Great Eastern Railway decided to extend itself to Cromer. In order to attract traffic, it asked the *Daily Telegraph* for assistance, and the editor of that journal sent Clement Scott off to Norfolk with orders to "write up" the holiday glories of that then unknown coast. Scott came, saw —and was conquered. His articles to the *Telegraph* "made" Poppyland—it is related that the youngsters of Sidestrand used cheekily to address him as "Mr. Poppyland"—but there is plenty of evidence that Scott was genuinely enthralled with the country,

and he followed up his business trip with holidays at Sidestrand. Other literary men came in his footsteps, among them Swinburne and Watts-Dunton, and Miss Jermy, the daughter of the Sidestrand Mill House, has recalled how the two would "go out to the shore and never speak to each other all day. Swinburne would climb the cliffs, and the other would stay at the very edge of the sea, each lost in his own thoughts in the particular environment he preferred." Another recollection of Miss Jermy's concerned mealtimes. "Watts-Dunton, an inveterate early-riser, always wanted his breakfast at five o'clock in the morning, whereas Swinburne could never face his until eleven." Nevertheless it was in Sidestrand Mill House that Swinburne wrote *Songs before Sunrise*; Watts-Dunton here wrote *Aylwin*.

On a momentous day in August, 1883, Clement Scott turned his back on "perhaps the prettiest watering-place of the East Coast and walked along the cliffs to get a blow and a look at the harvest that had just begun. It was the old story. At a mile removed from the seaside town I had left behind I did not find a human being. Below me, as I rested among the fern on the lighthouse cliff, there they all were, digging on the sands, playing lawn tennis, working, reading, flirting, and donkey riding, in a circle that seemed to me ridiculously small as I looked at it from this height. In that red-roofed village, the centre of all that was fashionable and select, there was not a bed to be had for love or money; all home comforts, all conveniences to which well-bred people were accustomed were deliberately sacrificed for the sake of a lodging amongst a little society that loved its band, its pier, its shingle, its sea. A

mile away there were farmhouses empty, cottages to let, houses to be hired for a song ; a mile to the right there were sands with no human being on them, deserted cliffs, empty caves, unfrequented rocks ; a miles to the left there was not a footprint on the beach, not a footfall on the grassy cliff. Custom had established a certain fashion at this pretty little watering-place and it was religiously obeyed ; it was the rule to go on the sands in the morning, to walk on one cliff for a mile in the afternoon, to take another mile in the opposite direction at sunset, and to crowd upon the little pier at night. But the limit was a mile either way. No one thought of going beyond the lighthouse ; that was the boundary of all investigation. Outside that mark the country, the farms and the villages were as lonely as in the Highlands."

Well, that part of *Poppyland*, at any rate, could not be written to-day ! Altogether apart from the tempting references to cheap and plenteous accommodation, such an air of enterprise would not be becoming in visitors who walked even ten miles along either cliff, instead of Clement Scott's one mile.

But however ordinary mortals may have rejoiced in the revelations of Clement Scott concerning Poppyland and the Garden of Sleep, others there were who looked askance at this broadcasting of glad tidings. Only a few years before Scott's time, in fact, Cromer had announced itself as " a quiet but fashionable little watering-place, wisely contented with those charms of nature with which it has been so liberally endowed, and those who seek for dissipation and gaiety will have to look elsewhere. Its undisturbed quiet has rendered it a paradise for the clergy and old ladies, whose never-failing theme of mutual congratulation

is the difficulty of access which preserves them from 'being overrun with those excursionists!'" In 1829 someone wrote "its bathing machines are nine in number and the bather is a careful and attentive man."

Autres temps. . . . It is no longer the fashion for old ladies to appear older than their grand-daughters; nor do the Powers that Be place restrictions on any ordinary form of gaiety.

Watching the steady procession of motors of all kinds making their way through the tortuous streets of Cromer it is amusing to recall a long descriptive effort in verse which saw the light in 1806 and of which a portion runs:

> Quiet the steady sociable proceeds,
> No danger in its course, and in the rear
> The humbler vehicle, that bears displayed
> In letters legible to every eye
> The stamp of fiscal avarice.

The first two lines certainly stand in need of revision in view of modern traffic conditions, and it is very doubtful if the moloch-like motor-coach would suffer to be dubbed "humbler" than say a two-seater, even if it does bear that "stamp of fiscal avarice"—a hackney-carriage licence!

Norfolk generally is so flat that visitors are invariably surprised to find Cromer quite a hilly little place. In addition to standing on a cliff edge its site is very undulating and a truthful picture of the place was given by the writer who pointed out that the only flat area to be seen is the sea. Even that, however, hides beneath its waters curious ridges and hollows which were once the streets and buildings of a Cromer that disappeared years ago; for Cromer stands at

one of those points on our coast most susceptible to the ravages of the sea.

Have you ever noticed, by the way, how the streams which rise within a few miles of Cromer flow at first *away* from the sea? A glance at the map will reveal the fact that there are some half-dozen streams which have their sources within only a few miles of the coast and which yet travel well over fifty miles before laying their tributary waters on the bosom of the deep. This circumstance is in itself illuminating: not only does it emphasize the southward slope of the hinterland of the Cromer district, but it suggests past times when the land stretched much farther to northward than at present. It suggests, too, the time when, one by one, the sources of each of the rivers will be cut off by the ever-hungry sea, and their beds will be left dry to bake and crack in the sun until inch by inch they, too, fall to the beach.

This is not altogether an idle fancy. Even a mile may seem a considerable distance when you have just lost the last bus and are forced to walk back to your lodgings by the sea, but when you look at the maritime history of Norfolk a mile represents not a very lengthy meal for the hungry waves; while since the ground falls away landward the rate of progress will tend to increase rather than to decrease. You may smile at the apocryphal "fishermen's yarns" concerning the traceried windows in which they still entangle their nets when a long way from shore; but if you visit, at intervals of a year or so, such a spot as Sidestrand, you will realize something of the terrible threat of the sea. And as you realize that with all our modern science and engineering we are still in many places absolutely at the sea's mercy

you will have no difficulty in grasping the reason for the disappearance of rich and prosperous Dunwich.

For many years Sidestrand's cylindrical flint tower stood desolate, deserted by its nave, while week by week one watched the cliff edge crumble back towards the tower. Then, in 1915, the end came, and the flints of Sidestrand tower were returned to the ocean bed. The church once centred a large and flourishing village, which has moved inland, but of the busy town of Shipden nothing is left but the mythical church windows which the fishermen find such a nuisance.

Cromer itself was at one time a port of some note: its harbour works have disappeared, and obviously strenuous efforts have been made to preserve what is left of the older Cromer that stood here before the fame of Poppyland was noised abroad. Other memories of those days crowd round the church, which is the most notable building of the modern town. Nowadays the church is none too large for the congregations attracted during the holiday season; but in winter one is inclined to ask here, as in so many other places, how it came about that so large a church was built. The answer is simply that when the church was erected it was designed to fit the regular congregations of that day: Cromer was a thriving seaport and its wealthy merchants made thankofferings as successive ships returned in safety from hazardous voyages. So the church waxed.

Came a time, however, when the inhabitants of Cromer were unable to support such a handsome building and it began to fall into disrepair, a condition which was aided by gunpowder, thanks to the ingenuity of one who held the tithes on condition

that he kept the building in good order! However, the church has been repaired and notwithstanding its disturbed career is a noble and interesting building. The gunpowder plot was not the least of its troubles, by the way; towards the end of the eighteenth century lead was stripped from the roof and sold in order to provide funds for the restoration of part of the interior! One may well believe that the people of Cromer were at their wits' end before adopting such a desperate remedy; and it is pleasant to observe that the church has been thoroughly restored and is now again well cared for and beloved.

In certain circles it is, I believe, considered not quite the thing to emulate Clement Scott's enthusiasm for the floral beauties of the Norfolk cliffs. "There are," we are assured, "equally fine stretches of poppies elsewhere"—which is apparently considered damning proof that those of Sidestrand are no longer beautiful! Sensible people who disregard this kind of humbug, however, still find Poppyland wellnigh indescribable. Great sheets of scarlet are bordered by broad rims of golden sand and set beneath a great arc of blue rising from the turquoise of the sea to fall on a wondrous landscape of green trees and golden cornfields through which the red is ever the most conspicuous tint. The predominant characteristic of Cromer, indeed, is "colour." Nowhere are there to be seen such fine sunsets as from the Lighthouse cliff, and if you should be walking along by Runton at sunset when a strong wind is whipping the sand up from the west you will not readily forget the vision of the living sheen with which the whole world seems to be touched. Apart from the contrasted green and gold and scarlet of the coast, Cromer specializes in a peculiar kind of

woodland. I am not prepared to explain just where the peculiarity lies—and by the word I do not mean eccentric, but merely that such woodlands are seldom met in other neighbourhoods—except in their effect upon those who wander among them. The firs of Felbrigg or the more deciduous avenues around by Northrepps have a character about them that marks them out as distinct from other woodlands of their kind. The Lion's Mouth one can match in many a place—charming and inviting as it is—so, too, with the glorious heath now happily the property of the National Trust and known as the Roman Camp Common. There are other bursts of heather and bracken and gorse quite comparable with this except in one particular—the view. The highest point of this common is hardly more than 300 feet above the sea, yet the effect as one looks around is that of being perched almost upon a mountain. Southward the green and gold and purple of Norfolk spreads into the blue, picked out here and there by a venerable church tower or a stately hall of mellow brick; northward we look across the roofs of Runton to where sea meets sky. All this cannot be seen at a glance; one's head is not kept swivelling round as when one stands upon a true peak; one can spend a whole afternoon—I would even suggest a whole day if the weather be really good—merely strolling round this great common and stopping here and there to look down the long vistas opened up between the trees.

If the Romans built all the camps attributed to them they can hardly have had time to do much else in this land of ours; yet the habit of labelling any old mound a "Roman camp" still persists—recently a quite eminent amateur archæologist, to my knowledge,

excitedly hailed as a Roman botontinus—or survey-mound—a small hillock which on examination proved to be full of wurzels! The cautious visitor accepts these "Roman" remains *cum grano* of course, but not often is he treated to something equally exciting; hence the pleasantness of the surprise which awaits those who explore the so-called Roman Camp near Cromer. The surprise consists of nothing less than a number of hollows in the ground which are recognized by authorities on the subject as the remains of a Neolithic village. Originally many of the hollows were as much as six feet deep, with a diameter of perhaps thirty feet. When the six feet had been increased by building up a low wall round the rim of the hollow, and a thatched roof had been spread umbrella-like over the whole work, resting on a central pole, such places must have afforded accommodation for a considerable number of people. Now only a few of these pit-dwellings remain, but we are told that at one time there were in the vicinity as many as two thousand of these ancient dwellings. Here is food for thought indeed!

Until quite recent years of greater sophistication the pits were tenanted by other ghosts than those of their Neolithic inhabitants, for the figure of a woman—clad in the conventional white costumes affected by self-respecting ghosts—was reputed to roam the neighbourhood o' nights, uttering cries which led to the hollows being known as "The Shrieking Pits." But on a fine sunny day, with the bees busy among the gorse or heather and the larks carolling overhead, there are few less ghostly places in the kingdom.

That there have been troublous times, of course it

would be idle to deny. The Paston letters tell us of the pleasant ways of the "pyrits" who were wont to descend upon the lonely and unprotected villages of this coast—and among the records of Sheringham is that of a petition of 1673 which related that the Sheringhamites of that day were "afraid every night ye enemy should come ashore and fire our towne when we be in our bedds: for ye houses stand very close together and all ye houses thatched with straw, that in one houres time ye towne may be burnt, for we have nothing to resist them but one gun with a broken carriage and foure musquetts which we bought at our own cost and charges." This, as they remark, is a "very poor defence against an enemy," and the force of their contention is increased when they admit that they "have no pouder nor shot for ye said gunn, nor musquetts, when we stand in need." Therefore they prayed the Lord Lieutenant that he would grant them "four or five musquetts more and half a hundred pound of pouder, and half a hundred pound of bullet"; and some indication of the stoutness of the hearts that beat in Sheringham is afforded by the concluding note of the petition "wee thinke wee should be able to defend ye attempt of a Dutch privateer"!

It remains to be added that the Lord Lieutenant appears to have been properly touched by the warlike spirit displayed, though he could not resist one sly dig—no doubt prompted by experience—and qualified the display of trust he made by presenting half a dozen "musquets," with powder and shot to match, with a warning to the recipients that they should not "imbocill ye said arms and ammunition!"

Sheringham has had to give ground to more formidable enemies than Dutch privateers, however, for

it once possessed a Harbour, which a century ago had at one point a depth of 20 feet. But less than fifty years previously that particular piece of the harbour floor had been covered by a high cliff, with houses upon it! Great ingenuity has been expended on groynes and breakwaters, and the village buttressed with solid walls of concrete, but the sea is always at work, and who can say for how long its progress has been stayed? West of Sheringham the map shows a stretch of shore marked "Weybourne Hope." This recalls a deep-water channel which at one time passed close into the shore and provided such facilities for invasion that a local legend asserted

> He who would old England win
> Must at Weybourne Hope begin.

But the fickle sea came to the rescue of old England and so effectually altered the coast-line of Norfolk that would-be invaders, I imagine, attach very little importance to the advice of the rhyme.

Returning to Cromer one passes Felbrigg, beautiful for its woods; less pleasantly remembered for the wild escapades of "Mad Windham," and with a church that deserves a visit if only for the very fine brasses: that to Sir Simon de Felbrygge, standard-bearer to Richard II, being especially interesting. But though Sir Simon caused the brass to be placed here during his lifetime it was at Norwich he was buried.

Let us now take an imaginary ramble, passing through Overstrand, where a whole series of churches stand as monuments to the destructive agencies of time and tide, and where lie the remains of Sir T. Fowell Buxton—a name now, one fears, with little

significance, but a generation or two back linked nobly with the cause of slavery abolition. So to Sidestrand and what the waves have spared of the Garden of Sleep, and on to Trimingham where the church is worth careful examination. Its principal point of interest is the fine screen, still showing traces of paintings depicting a number of saints, among them Petronilla, Cecilia, Clare and Edmund. Trimingham is now but a quiet little village, visited by flocks of tourists in the course of the summer; but there was a time when the tourists were of a different kind, for the church was reputed to hold no less venerable a relic than the Head of John the Baptist. Miracles were wrought at this shrine, and gifts were brought to adorn it, and the Trimingham pilgrimage was considered sufficiently important to have mention in a will. Thus we find Alice Cook of Horstead directing in 1478 "I will have a man to go a pilgrimage to St. John his head of Trimingham."

It has been complained that this is the age of no miracles. Well, if the "miracles" expected were of the class performed at Trimingham, can one wonder at their cessation? Among other things facility of travel and the interchange of ideas and knowledge brought about by printing would introduce very awkward complications for Trimingham (or anyone) professing to hold the head of John the Baptist to-day, if only for the reason that we now know that at least half a dozen other churches and cathedrals in Europe claimed to possess that saint's head. What we do lack, of course, is the simple faith of those who could derive spiritual strength from a mere alabaster bust that was probably manufactured in Nottingham.

With the exception that the atmosphere is not noticeably permeated by clergymen and old ladies of the kind who favoured Cromer a half-century ago, Mundesley now must be very much what Cromer was then: practically an unspoilt village.

A somewhat melancholy memory is that of Mundesley's connection with the poet Cowper. Here he would come during the great fits of depression which visited him in his later years, and his mood is expressed in the comparison he makes between himself and the crumbling cliffs. "Torn from my natural connections, I stand alone, and expect the storm that shall soon displace me." Yet at Mundesley he found something "inexpressibly soothing in the monotonous sound of the breakers." When at length the end came he was buried in the church at East Dereham, which we shall visit in a later chapter.

> Trimingham, Gimingham, Knapton and Trunch
> Lie together all in a bunch.

So at least the rhyme assures us, and as we have already visited Trimingham we may overlook the fact that it is a little outside the bunch suggested by the roads connecting Mundesley, Trunch and Knapton. The excursion can however be admirably rounded off by substituting Paston and Bacton in the "bunch"—and for wealth of historical and architectural interest it would be difficult to find a more charming bouquet.

Going westward from Mundesley, then, for a couple of miles, and visiting the church of Gimingham for the sake of its fine tower and porch (and lamenting that nothing remains of John of Gaunt's residence at Gimingham) we turn southward for Trunch, a far more interesting church. Two features here attract

visitors. The magnificent screen can hardly be matched in East Anglia. Not only is it wondrously carved, but it retains the paintings of the Twelve Apostles with which it was originally adorned. It is the kind of screen which helps most vividly to bring back past days: one could muse over it for hours, examining the details of its cornice and the tracery filling its arches.

The almost equally famous font is perhaps remarkable rather than beautiful. Certainly it must be unique. The actual font might be matched in half a dozen churches in Norfolk alone; it is the cover which attracts attention. From the corners of the six-sided platform on which the font stands rise a half a dozen pillars curiously carved with representations of foliage which issues from a vase and terminates somewhat illogically in the head of a beast. On the roof supported by these pillars is a heavily crocketed and canopied upper storey, of smaller dimensions than the lower, and eight-sided—rather like a very elaborate pepper box. The whole erection forms a kind of baptistery and compels attention.

Less than two miles eastward from Trunch is Knapton Church, justly famed on account of its very fine roof of Irish bog oak. No ordinary workman was responsible for this work, and the Rector considers it to have been the creation of Flemish craftsmen, probably one of the colony which formed at Worstead in the time of the first Henry. The date of the roof is given as 1503, and with its double hammer-beams and its numerous carvings of prophets, apostles, angels and saints provides plenty of scope for those who, wisely, come armed with field glasses.

South of the chancel arch is the doorway which

anciently led into the rood loft. The loft has gone long since, of course, but a very graceful screen divides the nave from the chancel.

If you have not rubbed up your Greek lately you may not at once realize that the Greek inscription round the carved font cover reads the same whether you read from left or from right. "Wash my sins and not my face only" is its terse message.

Eastward from Knapton is the railway line and a station labelled "Knapton and Paston," a sufficiently anachronistic reminder that we are approaching the home of that great family of courtiers, soldiers and influential men and women who in their Letters have given us such graphic pictures of life in the fifteenth century. Paston Hall, alas, is no more, but there yet remains a barn built by Sir William Paston and still bearing his name.

Several of the Pastons lie buried in the little church of Paston. On the floor of the chancel is a brass to Erasmus Paston, who died in 1538, and there is also a marble tomb to "the reviving memory of the vertuous and upright worthy dame Katherine Paston," who died 1628. The sculptor who erected the monument was, in his own words, "very extraordinarily entertained, and paid for it £340."

But the memorials of the Pastons are not of marble, nor are they found in churches; and it is probable that long after the effigy of Katherine Paston has fallen to decay scholars and lovers of literature in all parts of the world will be delighting in the *Paston Letters*.

Still going eastward from Paston the road approaches the sea, and Bacton is reached at a point where the way turns inland. Bacton is among the newest of

the East Anglian resorts. The sands are wonderful, and one may stroll south-eastward along the shore for miles without meeting a soul. It is astonishing to find, if the course is traced by the map, that Keswick, Walcott and Ostend are passed in turn; but there is little reminiscent of either Derwentwater or Catbells around *this* Keswick, nor is there bathing to band music and subsequent adjournment to the Casino at *this* Ostend. Some imp within us always delights to draw these whimsical contrasts, and indeed it is by comparison with their better known namesakes that these little Norfolk hamlets yield the charm of their unhurried, placid existence. Unfortunately, in some respects, the neighbourhood has been "discovered" and here and there clumps of bungalows—not always built with the simplest ideas regarding seemliness—form temporary homes for jaded town dwellers who rush out to this remote corner during weekends and at holiday times. Wherein they are both fortunate and wise. But I could wish one were not so frequently compelled to admit that in comparison with the works of Nature the works of men are "vile."

But you have probably followed the road inland from Bacton village which leads to what is left of Bromholm Priory. Before setting out it is well to make sure that the right road has been taken: the lanes in this quarter are apt to run confusingly, and signposts are not always so illuminating as one might wish. It is only a matter of a mile or so from Bacton Green to the Norman gateway of the ancient priory, known locally as Bacton Abbey, now so little cared for that the Norman walls of one of the transepts of the church have been joined by a flimsy modern

roof and the whole turned very simply into a handy shed !

After the day's visitors have gone, all is now so still and deserted here that it seems impossible that the few walls remaining are fragments of a great and prosperous priory that enjoyed a repute hardly second to that of Walsingham and was the home of pilgrimages made by high and by low and from far and near.

The reason for this greatness was the possession of a relic—the Rood of Bromholm—actually a small cross formed by placing transversely two pieces of wood said to have been fragments of the True Cross. How this precious relic came to such a remote spot as Bromholm you may well wonder, and the story throws some light on the widespread traffic in relics in early days.

According to Matthew Paris the Bromholm Rood was originally in the possession of Baldwin, Count of Flanders and Emperor of Constantinople. Its sanctity was such that it was always carried into battle and its influence was so great that time and again Baldwin's troops won where victory would have seemed at least a doubtful possibility. Then, one day, he went into fight without the relic. His men, as soon as the dread news spread—and it would spread like the plague !—were panic-stricken, and Baldwin and his army were hopelessly beaten. News of the tragedy came to Constantinople, and to Baldwin's chaplain there. A man without scruples, he had no compunction in running off with the choicest treasures under his charge, including the fragment of the Cross. Coming to England, he made his way to St. Albans, where he offered the treasures to the monks there.

No doubt they were almost inundated with proffered "relics of the true cross," for Erasmus remarked that there were sufficient so-called relics of the Cross actually cherished in shrines to load a fair-sized ship; how many non-accepted relics there were one dare not surmise; at any rate, the monks of St. Albans were not favourably impressed with the representations of this chaplain from Constantinople concerning his pieces of wood, and so they bade him good day after purchasing a jewelled cross from his store of treasures.

The incredulity of the monks of St. Albans was matched at several other monasteries. . . . It would seem that just then there was no market for relics of the Cross, though money was forthcoming for various other souvenirs the chaplain had brought with him from Constantinople.

And so the chaplain went from door to door, ever trying to convince the good monks of this land that his relic of the Cross was authentic. . . . Still none would believe, until at last he came to the poor little chapel of Bromholm, where he offered the brethren the relics merely on condition that they would give him shelter and make him one of their number. It is even said that to melt the hearts of the brethren of Bromholm he poured out a tale concerning his anxiety for the future of his two children.

However persuaded, the Bromholm brotherhood agreed to accept custody of the chaplain's relic, and we can picture the delight the chaplain took in broadcasting reports of the various miracles which soon began to be wrought here as a result of its influence! The blind had their sight restored, the halt and the lame again became active pedestrians, even the dead returned from the grave to lead an active and useful

life, thanks to the influence of Bromholm Rood. Imagine the chaplain's exultation as he arranged for reports of these occurrences, and of the increasing number of pilgrims to Bromholm, to be conveyed in roundabout and artless ways to St. Albans and other places where he had met only with rebuff!

The fame of Bromholm spread. You may remember how in the Canterbury Tales (the Weaver's Tale) the miller's daughter cries "Helpe holy crosse of Bromeholme." Langland, too, in *Piers Plowman* makes his repentant tradesman pray: "The Roode of Bromholm bryng me out of dette."

The great days of Bromholm have long passed. Bees and butterflies now flit in and out where stood church, chapter-house and dormitory; tourists in rubber-soled shoes carelessly walk where once the pilgrim advanced barefooted or even on his knees. One thing I did notice—and whether it may be any explanation of those miracles of long ago I cannot say—there are few keener or more invigorating pieces of coast than that around Bromholm and Bacton, and if those who dwell in the bungalows attribute their rude health to the air rather than to the Bromholm Rood the results are often hardly less than miraculous.

One other memory is connected with Bromholm—that of the burial of Sir John Paston in 1479. That was a great time for Bacton. "For three continuous days one man was engaged in no other occupation than that of flaying beasts, and provision was made of thirteen barrels of beer, twenty-seven barrels of ale and a runlet of red wine of fifteen gallons." Forty-one pigs were sacrificed for the feast, as well as forty-nine calves and ten oxen. And the outer man was

not overlooked : among other concerns a barber spent nearly a whole week in shaving and hair-cutting the monks.

It is not difficult to find the way from Bacton to the busy town of North Walsham, where we are again in contact with the Pastons, for it was the Sir William Paston whose superscription we saw on the barn at Paston who built the grammar school which became famous as that which taught Horatio Nelson, Archbishop Tenison and Sir H. Rider Haggard, and which was the scene of that oft-related anecdote of Nelson's youth when, having declined to go raiding pear-trees on the ground that he did not like pears, he was roundly accused of being a "funk." That night Horatio crept alone out of the dormitory, alone raided the orchard and alone brought back a bag of pears which he set before his schoolmates. The incident had no effect on his taste for pears ; but from that time forth no one dared to brand him "coward."

North Walsham church has many a link with the brave days of old. On the south porch, for instance, may be distinguished the heraldic emblem of Shakespeare's "time-honoured Lancaster"—stout old John of Gaunt. In the chancel is a monument to the Paston who built the Grammar School and who before he died instructed a Loddon stonemason regarding the construction and decoration of his tomb, for which £200 was to be paid.

It is still a noble building, notwithstanding the ruined tower, but in its heyday it must have been a fine church indeed, its walls decorated with rich hangings and its chancel arch spanned with a rood loft on which was lavished the utmost skill of those

Flemish craftsmen who made the roof at Knapton and the screen at Trunch, and who turned into a household word the name of Worstead, borne by a village lying some three miles southward of North Walsham. Worstead is no longer a centre for the manufacture of its particular kind of wool, but at one time genuine Worstead garments supplied the keynote of fashion, as witness the letter from John Paston to his cousin Margaret asking her to "send me hither two ells of worsted for doublets, to happe me this cold winter, and that ye enquire where William Paston bought his tippet of fine worsted, which is almost like silk, and if that be much finer than that ye should buy me after seven or eight shillings, then buy me a quarter and the nail thereof for collars, though it be dearer than the other, for I would make my doublet all worsted for worship of Norfolk."

Among the Flemish immigrants who brought the worsted industry to England were many craftsmen who delighted to adorn the churches of the neighbourhood with their painting and carving, and as one might expect, Worstead church is not the least beautiful in this respect. The magnificent screen introduces portraits of two little-known saints. One is St. Wilgefortis, the beautiful girl who so strongly desired to go unmarried that she prayed earnestly that a beard might grow and hide her beauty. The beard grew, but her father was so outraged that he crucified her. St. William of Norwich also suffered crucifixion. He was done to death stealthily in Thorpe Wood, outside Norwich; but the foul deed was witnessed and told to the world, and so much interest was aroused by the case that the Boy Martyr

became instrumental in the performance of many miracles. On the north side of Norwich Cathedral they still point out the chapel of St. William.

From Worstead we may readily return to Cromer by railway or by road through North Walsham, but a tempting detour takes us via Oxnead. I can tell you readily enough how Oxnead lies almost midway between Aylsham and Coltishall and almost due south-west of North Walsham, but the journey to the little lane leading up to the church and the hall is much more adventurous, running across country by Westwick, Swanton Abbot and Skeyton, and there turning towards Brampton. Memories of Clement Paston linger around the remains of Oxnead Hall. Hither came Charles II to honour by a visit that militant member of a famous family, who was buried beneath a handsome marble tomb in the tree-embowered Oxnead Church. He must have been a man of singular abilities, for he distinguished himself hardly less ashore than afloat ; as his epitaph relates :

> . . . princes he served four
> In peace and war, as fortune did command,
> Sometimes on the sea and sometimes on the shore.

In one of the Paston Letters there is a reference to Oxnead rectory which throws an interesting light on housing questions of bygone centuries. In those days glass was costly, and not every house could boast glazed windows, so that glass was frequently regarded much as we now consider tenant's fixtures. When, therefore, the Rector of Oxnead found it necessary to vacate the rectory, the Letters record that he took not only the furniture but the windows as well! But in those days parsons were by no means models

of lawful conduct. There was one at Snoring, for instance, who murdered a man and underwent a term in the stocks by way of punishment! Doubtless he made full use of his experiences and opportunities in sermons preached after he was again at liberty!

Oxnead, in itself rather an intriguing name, has several others of more than ordinary interest around it. The little stream which flows into the Bure a few miles to the west, for instance, is rather nicely known as The Mermaid. Ranging to the south we come to Little Hautbois, suggestive of Norman days. Stratton Strawless is a name the appropriateness of which I have had no time to investigate; Sco Ruston and Scottow are other names that challenge enquiry.

But we must away northward to Cromer, along a road that will offer still further inducements to linger. One can hardly pass by Aylsham, for instance, without halting to visit the fine old church, where we again encounter stout old John o' Gaunt. At Aylsham the arms of that doughty prince figure on the font, and he is generally reputed to have been responsible for the church itself. There is much to interest one in this church; the screen, for instance, is early sixteenth century: it was given by Thomas Wymer, who is also commemorated by a brass.

Aylsham market-place appeals to one on any day of the week. On Tuesdays it still serves its legitimate purpose; at other times it provides a very pleasant point from which to view the church tower with its curious little spirelet, and it has a number of buildings of its own which are well worth a glance.

Gardeners may care to seek out in the churchyard

the gravestone of Humphrey Repton, a celebrated landscape gardener of a century or more ago. The inscription runs :

> Not like Egyptian tyrants consecrate,
> Unmixed with others shall my dust remain ;
> But mouldering, blending, melting into earth
> Mine shall give form and colour to the rose
> And while its vivid blossoms cheer mankind
> Its perfumed odours shall ascend to heaven.

Aylsham, of course, is " on " the Bure, and notwithstanding the hindrances of locks between here and Coltishall, it is a considerable headquarters for those exploring Broadland by boat. Some of the prettiest river boating in Norfolk is, in the opinion of many, that in the vicinity of Aylsham.

It is also a good point from which to visit, by train or road, the beautiful and interesting church at Cawston—four miles to the west—a Perpendicular structure with a marvellous double hammer-beam roof, ornamented with angels and cherubs, and possessing a fine rood screen and other noteworthy details. Or we might go two miles further to pleasant little Reepham, with another of fame even in this county of splendid parish churches.

When all is said and done, however, Aylsham probably receives the majority of its visitors on account of its proximity to the park and hall of Blickling. It is a quadrangular building of the mellowest brick and with turrets at each corner and a lofty clock tower over the principal entrance. All around are beautifully kept lawns and gardens, and one feels that it was not by accident that the house was so well provided with windows, including a number of oriels of uncommon grace. Originally there was a

moat, but this has long been converted into gardens; but the bridge remains.

Blickling is inseparably connected with the memory of the ill-fated Anne Boleyn, but the house she knew is not that now before us, which was raised in the early years of the seventeenth century by one of the Hobarts, who had bought the estate from the Boleyns. Earlier owners of the estate included those two stout old knights, Sir John Fastolff who built Caister Castle, and Sir Thomas Erpingham. In 1671 the Hall was the scene of great festivities on the occasion of a visit from Charles II and his Queen, and the event is referred to in the lines which remind us that—

BLICKLING.

> Blickling two Monarchs and two Queens has seen;
> One King fetched thence, another brought a Queen.

Doubt has been cast on the tradition that Blickling was the birthplace of Anne Boleyn—Hever in Kent and Rochford in Essex also claim that distinction—but the claim of Blickling is generally allowed to stand: it is at any rate conceded that here she spent her childhood. There is also considerable doubt as to whether Henry did "fetch" her, and the enthusiasm of local historians knows no bounds when it encourages such a statement that Anne was married to Henry at Blickling instead of at Whitehall, as most people believe.

As we pace these quiet walks and look around on the peaceful scene we may reflect that only three

years elapsed between the January of 1533 when Anne was married to Henry and the May of 1536 when, having incurred the displeasure of the King by presenting him with a daughter, instead of a son and heir, she was involved in charges including treason and was beheaded on Tower Hill. Walford assures us that directly after that crime her body was "tossed into an old arrow chest and hastily buried" in the chapel of St. Peter-ad-Vincula. But local superstition was busy round her burial-place as around that of her birth. Half a dozen miles south-west of Blickling is the little church of Salle, long the burial-place of the Boleyns, and to this little sanctuary the body of the unfortunate Anne was conveyed in secret on the night of her execution. "God," says Wyatt, "provided for her corpse sacred burial, even in a place as it was consecrate to innocence"—a remark that can hardly be interpreted as a reference to burial in the Tower chapel. Another tradition said that Anne's remains were taken secretly from the Tower, not to Salle but to Horndon, Essex. One could wish for evidence that she rested in either of these places rather than in that cemetery which Macaulay called "the saddest place on earth," but when, some years ago, her supposed tomb in Salle church was opened it was found to be empty.

It is, or used to be, an article of local belief that on the 19th of May each year—the anniversary of her execution—her spirit revisits the Hall in which she spent her youth. But although it was well known that the ghost made its appearance, no one appears to have seen it, for at the first sight of the headless horses and coachman all eyes were hastily averted, lest they should behold the ghastly apparition within

the coach—the queen, garbed in white, holding in her hands her severed head.

But that is not the only coach that disturbs the nocturnal peace of Blickling, for Anne's father once a year is reputed to ride the neighbourhood in a black coach drawn by twelve headless horses. The extent of his ride is regulated by the number of bridges crossed; not until twelve have been passed over may he return to his grave. According to one version, this ride had its origin on the night the news of Anne's execution reached Blickling.

Having seen the Hall and the Park, many visitors hasten back to their motors, but time should be spared for a peep into the little church, with its tombs of the Boleyns, including one Anna, who died in 1479, and one to Sir Nicholas Dagworth, who built the house which preceded the present Hall and was that known to Henry's murdered queen.

If you are disposed yet farther to delay your return to Cromer you should go northward from Blickling. Here are two parks of some interest on account of past occupants. Wolterton Hall was built for the first Baron Walpole, and was able to satisfy the critical Horace, who was "really charmed with Wolterton: it is all wood and water." Wood and water still form the outstanding features of its scenery; the trees are particularly fine.

West of Wolterton and standing within its moat is the beautiful old Mannington Hall. And here, again, we are among ghosts, for Mannington was the scene of that curious happening described by Dr. Jessopp in *An Antiquary's Ghost Story*. Sitting one night at his desk, he had his attention attracted by a white hand which suddenly appeared at his side. Turning,

Blickling Hall
1809

he saw "the figure of a somewhat large man, with his back to the fire, bending slightly over the table and apparently examining the pile of books." His face was not visible from where Dr. Jessopp sat, but he saw "his closely cut, reddish brown hair, his ear and shaved cheek, his eyebrow, the corner of his right eye, the side of the forehead and a large, high cheek-bone. He was dressed in what I can only describe as an ecclesiastical habit of thick corded silk, or some such material, close up to the throat, and a narrow rim or edging, of about an inch broad, of satin or velvet, serving as a standup collar and fitting close to the chin. The right hand, which had first attracted my attention, was clasping without any great pressure the left hand; both hands were in perfect repose and the large blue veins of the right hand were conspicuous. I remember thinking the hand was like the hand of Velasquez's magnificent 'Dead Knight' in the National Gallery."

The figure disappeared on a slight movement from Dr. Jessopp, but it reappeared for a few seconds some minutes later. Dr. Jessopp concluded the account: "This is a simple and unvarnished statement of facts. Explanation, theory or inference I leave to others."

If there is little that is ghostly in the Norwich-Cromer road there is even less along the fine coast road westward from Cromer and passing through the popular Runtons to Sheringham, strongly buttressed against the onslaughts of the waves.

Sheringham is one of those places which "grow on you." There is little in the town itself to claim interest—even the church is outclassed in this county of superlatively fine churches, but a little exploration

will reveal the life of the sands, the glorious commons, ablaze with gorse, heather or dying bracken, and the justly famous Pretty Corner. There are the woods, too—and a little to the east, in a delightful situation, the ruins of Beeston Priory.

Gresham, in addition to connections with Chaucer and Sir Thomas Gresham, is inseparably linked with the Pastons by reason of the heroic stand made by Dame Margaret Paston against Lord Moleyns and a thousand men.

SANDRINGHAM.

CHAPTER VII

HOLT TO KING'S LYNN

MANY a lad, delighting to walk fists-in-pockets, has been " threatened " by despairing parents with banishment to Holt, the school where the boys' trouser pockets are sewn up—with evident result, be it noted, on the carriage of the young men there trained. It would not be a bad thing if such a fashion were introduced to Eton, or upon the Hill!

The School was founded by the same Sir Thomas Gresham who founded London's Royal Exchange and whose industrious habits are commemorated by the golden grasshopper that serves as weather-vane thereon. As with the Exchange, so with the School at Holt—new buildings have replaced those known to the founder and the school is now well situated on the Cromer road. A feature of some interest is the roof of the science buildings, which is formed of Norfolk reed thatch. You may see this thatch all over the county, but for various reasons it is slowly dropping into disuse, and it was a happy thought on the part of the master who presented the buildings to stipulate that they should be covered with the characteristic brown thatch of Norfolk.

Holt stands within a crook of the little Glaven, a stream which unlike several others in the neighbourhood in the words of the late Walter Rye, is " distinctly visible to the naked eye." In the foregoing chapter we have noticed the number of streams rising within a few miles of the coast, yet flowing almost directly *inland*, and for the first part of its course the little Glaven flows steadily south-westward. Round about Hunworth, however, it changes its mind, makes an abrupt turn and runs away northward towards the sea, only winning through the last few hundred yards after a sharp and never ceasing tussle with the great spit of sand and shingle forming Blakeney Point.

Curious how these sluggish rivers are so often presided over by sleepy towns. Take, for instance, the village of Cley-next-the-Sea. There was a time when it was not merely next the sea but was a port of some consequence situated right on the coast. But the vagaries of coast erosion have steadily built up a belt of flat shore between Cley and the sea—while Cromer, Sheringham and Sidestrand have a very different tale to tell. But the long westward-pointing spits at Blakeney and Brancaster are in their way eloquent of the force and direction of the coastal scour along this shore. Cley, then, having been placed next the sea was a port no longer. For centuries it has treasured its maritime traditions—that, for instance which tells how the men of Cley made a prisoner of the unfortunate son of the Bruce when he was driven ashore here in 1406, and packed him off, strongly guarded, to London. Most eloquent of Cley's past is its grand old church. Begun in the period when Decorated architecture was in general fashion, it had to wait until Decorated had given way to Perpendicular ere it received its tower

and the west end of its nave, and even now the transepts remain uncompleted. But it is a grand old building, and even in this county of splendid churches stands out as a fine example of ecclesiastical art. The south porch is particularly noticeable, bravely displaying as it does the arms of Richard II and Anne of Bohemia, the arms of England, and the arms of such doughty families as the De la Poles, Warennes and Erpinghams.

Warlike associations of another kind and another age are recalled by the epitaph to " James Grieve, who was an assistant of Sir Cloudesley Shovel in burning ye ships in ye port of Tripoli in Barberii, January 14th, 1675–6, for his good service pformed was made Capt. of the ship called the *Orange Tree* of Algier, in 1677, and presented with a medal of gold by King Charles ye2." Sir Cloudesley Shovel was born at Cockthorpe.

A mile or so westward from Cley is Blakeney, if possible more somnolent than its neighbour " next the sea." Dominating the scene is the tall-towered church. Though not on the same scale as that of Cley, it has a splendid hammer-beam roof over the nave, and is noted for a curious little turret or beacon tower sprouting from the roof of the chancel.

Between the road and the sea stretches a great belt of salt marshes, variously dismissed by travellers as " dismal," " uninviting," or apostrophized as heaven-sent places in which to watch the bird life which is so prolific here, and which happily has official recognition since Blakeney Point has been declared a bird sanctuary. Indeed, it is so prolific that the local fishermen have complained that the birds eat up all the fish! But birds always have been plentiful here. Long before the National Trust proclaimed Blakeney Point the

Earl of Leicester had a remarkable collection of rare and beautiful birds which had visited Holkham. Among the annual visitors to these marshes are such rarities as the black tern, ruff and avocet, while the sheldrake is particularly numerous.

Those to whom the marshes do not appeal may care to try their luck inland—the district is full of interest. A road from Blakeney or Cley will take them via Wiveton—the brasses in the church are good—or Glandford—where lovers of woodcarving will be delighted with some modern work—to Langham, long the residence of that delight of our youthful days—Captain Marryat. He lived in Manor Cottage—where *Masterman Ready*, *The Privateersman*, *The Settlers* and *The Children of the New Forest* first saw the light—at the west end of the village, where the road forks ; but the house now there is not that known to Marryat. His grave is in Langham churchyard.

Marryat *was* a captain, and had seen service before he settled down to become author, and one can well imagine that he was further influenced in his literary work by the environment of his new home, for on every hand are associations of an adventurous nautical kind. The right-hand road by Manor Cottage, for instance, leads in a mile or so to Cockthorpe, which proudly claims to have been the birthplace of those stout old seadogs Sir John Narborough and Sir Cloudesley Shovel, while the redoubtable Sir Christopher Mings, or Minks, was also born in the neighbourhood. Was it merely a coincidence that a certain young man who set out from the rectory of Burnham Thorpe, also in this part of Norfolk, should have attained fame as an admiral ? Well has this district been dubbed " The Sea Kings' Land."

The road which goes to the left at Manor Cottage, Langham, would take us to Binham, where considerable remains of a Benedictine Priory are to be seen, particularly the nave of the church, which at the Dissolution became the parish church and was thus spared the sad fate of so much of the beautiful work that graced our land. As it is, Binham has an Early English west front of some distinction and a nave that is almost completely Norman.

What joy there is in a map! Look, for instance, at the place names scattered south-westward of Binham, towards Fakenham. Can one imagine a more delightful series than Lohengrin, Workhouse, Snoring? Stiffkey, too, is an uncommon name, and its novelty is increased by the local habit of rendering it Stewkey. The Stewkey merits a word here as one of the rivers which does run towards the coast from a source some way inland; though not without some misgivings, apparently, in its earlier course in the neighbourhood of Melton Constable. Hereabouts is pleasant scenery and the fine park surrounding the mansion built towards the end of the seventeenth century for the Astleys, Barons Hastings.

A few miles farther on its course to the sea the gradually widening Stewkey makes a turn towards Fakenham, where it would have assuredly been captured by the Wensum, flowing sturdily on towards Norwich. But the Stewkey turns north, and so we go on alone for the few miles to Fakenham, which is an extremely busy place in the height of the motoring season; so much so that quite a number of people take "as read" its quite interesting church.

One of the roads converging at Fakenham is that from Swaffham and London, and passes Raynham

Park, the seat of the Marquis of Townshend. The mansion was long thought to have been built by Inigo Jones, but recently doubt has been cast on the assumption. The place was enlarged by the first Viscount Townshend, who married Sir Robert Walpole's sister Dorothy. This lady is said still to haunt the Hall; she is also credited with visits to Houghton Hall, the Walpole seat, where as "The Brown Lady of Raynham" she so frightened the Prince Regent that he curtailed his visit!

From Raynham you may come to Houghton by way of Rudham, East and West—with the exercise of the bump of locality, for the road is not quite easy to find.

Of the many fine houses in East Anglia, Houghton is certainly in the front rank. It was built by Sir Robert Walpole, the great politician, on or near the site of the home of the Walpoles since, in the twelfth century, they moved hither from Walpole St. Peter, bringing with them the first part of the name of the village from which they migrated. Fine as the Hall was—and is, for that matter—it was for its contents that it was most renowned. Titians, Rembrandts, Murillos and Vandyks were here almost in profusion, and the furnishings were on a similar scale. A glimpse of the interior is afforded by a passage in Horace Walpole's letters: "The Domenichino is delightful. My father is as much transported with it as I am. It is hung in the gallery, where are all his most capital pictures, and he himself thinks it beats all the Guidos."

Only a few years later, however, the estate passed into the hands of a descendant of very different tastes, and we all know Horace's caustic comments upon the changes in the pictures.

Houghton has a further interest in that when the

Hall was built the existing village was "removed" to its present site—or rather, new houses and cottages were here erected in place of those formerly occupied by the villagers of Houghton. In the opinion of many, it was the prospect of the forsaken older village which moved Goldsmith to write *The Deserted Village*, though contemporary documents have gone at least some way to prove this sweet Auburn far from the loveliest village of the plain. The wholesale scrapping of one village for another had, nevertheless, its poignant note, and one can well understand that villagers were less perturbed by insanitary conditions than by the prospect of forsaking the homestead in which their family had dwelt perhaps for centuries.

WALSINGHAM.

Grateful as we should be to the motor for carrying us speedily and in comfort to many an outlying place of interest and beauty, it must be confessed that at times the internal combustion engine is sadly out of the picture. The proper way to approach Little Walsingham is on foot, or at least astride a horse, in the manner of the pilgrims of old: even if the horse goes lame one can console oneself that many a time such a calamity must have befallen a pilgrim along this very same road. But when a motor decides to develop chronic ailments in the carburettor one's musings are torn to shreds by considerations of jets

and floats and air-locks ; and yet—and always assuming that one does arrive eventually—the pretty village of Walsingham has such an air of its own that it can quite successfully brush away the memory of modern troubles and put one in the proper frame of mind to dwell on its wonderful past.

It is perhaps necessary to warn new-comers that of that past Walsingham has little to show. There is a fine Perpendicular gatehouse of flint and the remains of the east end of the church ; beyond these and a few less easily labelled heaps of stone one is free to reconstruct Walsingham as one will.

This little spot, dreaming away the sunny hours among its trees, was once the most visited place in England, hardly second even to Becket's famous shrine at Canterbury. Here came the third, seventh and eighth Henries, Edward I and Edward II, and the fame of the place was such that to visit it David Bruce, with twenty knights obtained a safe-conduct from the Wardens of the Marches, granted by order of Edward III ; while immediately after Flodden Queen Catherine wrote to her consort, " I now goo to our Lady at Walsingham that I promised soo long agoo to see." Henry VII, after his victory at Stoke-on-Trent, offered his banner to " Our Ladye at Walsingham," where before he made his vows. Henry VIII, adopting the rôle of a true pilgrim, walked barefoot the last two miles from Barham. . . . One wonders how his thoughts ran as he hung a chain of gold round the neck of the sacred image : whether he was already contemplating the destruction of the shrine which followed a few years later. . . .

How the Augustinian Priory of Walsingham became favoured with the actual Sancta Casa of Nazareth

Walsingham
1810

" where the Virgin was saluted by the Angel Gabriel " is a matter beyond the scope of such a book as this ; the monks assured pilgrims that not only was it the actual building, but that since its miraculous transference to Walsingham it had been visited by none other than the Virgin herself. Miraculous, too, was the manner in which the house had been dropped down so as just to cover two wells, which speedily became possessed of powers beyond the ordinary.

> Our blessed Laydie with blessed Minystrys
> Herself being here chief Artificer
> Arrered thys sayde house with Angells handys
> Rered it and sette it there it is.
> (Ballad of 1460.)

But the chiefest relics consisted of a phial containing some of the Virgin's milk—which Erasmus compared in appearance to dry chalk or the white of an egg—and fragments of the Cross, which the same observer adjudged so numerous that if all were laid together they would load a ship.

So holy was the shrine considered that it was generally believed that the Milky Way was placed in the heavens for no other reason than to serve as a guide for pilgrims to Walsingham ! Piers Plowman tells us :

> Heremytes on an heep
> With hoked staves
> Wenten to Walsyngham
> And hired wenches after,
> Great lobies and longe
> That lothe were to swynke ;
> Clothed hem in copes,
> To ben knowen from others ;
> And shopen hem heremytes
> Their ese to have.

Of the scene that awaited the pilgrims on arrival let Erasmus speak :

" The church is splendid and beautiful, but the Virgin dwells not in it : that, out of veneration and respect, is granted to her son. She has her church so contrived as to be on the right hand of her son ; but neither in that does she live, the building being not yet finished, and the wind runs through it on all sides, for both doors and windows are open and the ocean (the parent of the winds) is hard by. In the church, which I told you is unfinished, is a little narrow chapel of wood, into which the pilgrims are admitted at each side by a narrow door ; there is but little light, almost none indeed except that of the wax tapers, which have a very grateful smell ; but if you look in you will say it is a seat of the gods, so bright and shining it is all over, with jewels, gold and silver."

Alas ! we cannot " look in." Henry's myrmidons seized the image and bore it off to a fiery end at Chelsea, load after load of spoil was carted away and the buildings left bare and tenanted only by the breezes sweeping in from the North Sea.

Much as we may regret the extravagances of the monks, it is difficult not to echo the plaint of one who knew the place both in its heyday and after its destruction :

Bitter, bitter, oh to behoulde
The grasse to growe
Where the walles of Walsingham
So stately did showe.

Oules do scrike where the sweetest himnes
Lately were songe,
Toades and serpents hold their dennes
Where the palmers did throng.

About 1345 the Franciscans proposed to open a rival house at Walsingham, much to the consternation of the prior and canons of Our Lady. They stated that they closed their gates at sundown and that pilgrims arriving after closing time waited, with their gifts, until morning; and admitted, quite frankly, that if the Franciscans entertained them meanwhile the pilgrims were at least unlikely to bring gifts when they came, next day, to the original shrine.

However, the Franciscans came, and we may still see remains of their establishment.

Recently, pilgrimages to Walsingham have been revived, and sightseeing may be interrupted by—or should one say it may interrupt—groups of pilgrims anxiously filling bottles with water from the holy wells. It is reported that cures have been effected through the medium of prayer and the application of Walsingham waters, and there are those who cherish the ambition that Walsingham may one day become an English Lourdes. I hope not. The charm of the place lies in the fact that there is hardly a modern building in or around the village: the last thing one wishes to see is the commercialization of Walsingham, with a huge barracks, and the countryside plastered with hoardings inviting one to stay at the Pilgrim's Hostel.

Of Wells, neighbouring Walsingham on the north, the most picturesque corner is the quay, reached by a little channel crossing the sands and marshes between the town and the sea, and overlooked by storehouses and mills. The church is held to be an exact copy of that burnt down some sixty years ago, but it has not the glamour of age and folk who stay at Wells do so principally on account of its proximity to such

places as Walsingham, Holkham and the great stretches of sand to the north.

Tea-drinking has become a general and frequent habit since the War ; but a century ago only folk in fairly prosperous circumstances could imbibe that beverage more than occasionally and a striking tribute to the prosperity of Wells at that time is contained in Arthur Young's astonished statement that the inhabitants drank tea twice a day, and some of them a third time, for dinner. Habits changed, but Wells went on its way undisturbed, and when Walter White came here the appearance of the town moved him to a complimentary remark. " Oh, as to that," airily replied the inhabitant addressed, " You see, we have four thousand inhabitants here, and six-and-thirty public houses, and our vicar gets £800 a year. Now you'll understand all about that ! "

A mile or two of pretty road brings one to the little model village at the northern gateway of Holkham Park, famous the world over as the creation of the Earl of Leicester—Coke of Norfolk, " the first farmer in England."

When Coke entered upon possession of the Holkham estate in 1776 the annual rental was £2,200. It was " a barren desert " and in his oft-quoted phrase it was a common sight to see two rabbits quarrelling over the only blade of grass in view. Fifty years later the revenue from the fifteen hundred acres of plantations only was £2,700, and from the whole estate £20,000.

This remarkable rise in value was achieved by one of those flashes of genius which mark the great man. In these days the effect of marl on agricultural land is well understood, but it was Coke who had the idea of digging up the marl which lay beneath the sandy

waste of his estate and of scattering it over the sand so that the desert was quite literally made to blossom as the rose. In view of the undoubted benefits of his experiment, it is curious to reflect that his schemes were carried out in the face of very great and determined opposition; but he won through and the Holkham estates can hold their own with others which Nature endowed at the outset with the richest of soils.

"Coke of Norfolk" is commemorated by a Corinthian column surmounted by a sheaf of barley—the whole somewhat reminiscent of London's monument of the Great Fire—but of Coke, as of Wren at St. Paul's, one may write *si monumentum*. . . .

Coke was not only a farmer, however, he was an art collector of no mean talent, and the pictures and statuary at Holkham are as famous in their way as the estate is in agricultural circles. Among the most valuable treasures in the library were two illuminated manuscripts—known as the Holkham Gospels—acquired by the Earl of Leicester for the modest sum of £200 but which have recently passed to the Pierpont Morgan National Library for a considerably higher price. There are gorgeous Raphaels, Vandyks, Rubens, Gainsboroughs, but special permission must be sought by those who would visit these treasures.

Chantrey was once a visitor at Holkham, and had the fortune to kill two woodcocks at one shot, a feat he commemorated as few could in carving, and which in turn brought the tributes:

> **Life in death, a mystic lot**
> **Dealt thou to the winged band;**
> **Death from thine unerring shot,**
> **Life from thine undying hand.**

Driven from the north that would have starved them
This is the way that Chantrey sarved them.
He shot them first and then he carved them.

It is puzzling that a man so appreciative of beauty should have "planned, built and decorated" (as the inscription over the main entrance tells) such an ugly house as Holkham. Its prison-like exterior gives little indication of the splendours within, from the pictures and sculpture and library to the marble staircase.

Holkham Hall has its own post office, and the Earl of Leicester is the postmaster. I have not ascertained whether he ranks as an employee of the G.P.O., or whether he would be eligible for a pension on retirement; but no doubt some interesting correspondence could be exchanged on this subject between Holkham and St. Martins-le-Grand!

For bird-lovers there can be few happier holiday grounds than the neighbourhood of Holkham; birds are not only numerous but varied. The local fishermen vouch for their numbers, the terns in particular having been accused of endangering the local coast fisheries by their habit of gobbling up immature fish. As to variety, they range from crows and gulls to heron and the wild grey goose. The Holkham Museum also includes locally-captured specimens of birds from the Far East.

The tree-lined main road skirts the Park westward to within a couple of miles of Burnham Overy. In other parts of Britain it is usually sufficient to mention one part of a compound name; from Bettws-y-Coed to Walton-on-the-Naze no great confusion is caused by dropping the explanatory and often cumbrous tail. But in Norfolk, particularly North Norfolk, it is necessary to be explicit in asking the way. There

is, for instance, a point a few miles west of Holkham from which one may go north, south, east or west, and yet in each case encounter at least one Burnham within a mile. Westward of Lynn this amiable habit of duplication is repeated by the Tilneys, the Terringtons and the Walpoles. Therefore, to visit the birthplace of Horatio Nelson be careful to turn to the left along the lane to Burnham *Thorpe*, spurning for the nonce the invitations to the other Burnhams in the neighbourhood—Overy, Market, Norton, Deepdale.

Nothing is left of the house in which, in 1758, a son was born to the rector of Burnham Thorpe. The principal "souvenir" of that brilliant son of the rectory is the pulpit in the church, constructed of wood from the *Victory*. Extraordinary as it seems, Nelson drifted haphazard into the Service in which he was to gain such distinction and to which he brought such honour. Yet until he saw in the paper an announcement of his uncle's appointment to the *Raisonable* there is no indication that any thought of entering the Navy had passed through Horatio's mind or that of his father. The family were, however, in straitened circumstances, and the youngest son considered it was "up to" him to become at least self-supporting, and it was this desire which prompted him to persuade his elder brother to write to his father suggesting that the uncle might be able to find an opening for him. This the uncle promised to do, though it cannot be said that he exhibited undue cordiality at the prospect. "What," he wrote, "has poor Horatio done, who is so weak, that he above all the rest should be sent to rough it out at sea? But let him come, and the first time we go into action a cannon ball may knock off his head and provide for him at once."

By a fortunate dispensation, no cannon ball "provided" for him until he had made the name of Nelson ring the world round, and one more had been added to the roll of those who had gone down to the sea from this part of Norfolk and achieved fame.

There is a tablet in the church at Burnham Thorpe, and the village hall is also a Nelson memorial.

The main road may be regained by way of a southward detour taking us by North Creake and the few remains of the Augustinian monastery founded in 1206. They lie nearly a mile north of the village, and are approached by a lane on the left at the point where the road we follow south-south-west from Burnham Thorpe joins the Fakenham road. The property was given by Henry VII to his mother, from whom it passed to Christ's College, Cambridge. Only a few arches remain to tell of its former beauty and extent. The church of North Creake, against the main road, has a good hammer-beam roof and a thirteenth-century screen. The font cover has hinged panels.

From Creake we turn northward again and begin the perambulation of the Burnhams, none of which really justifies a halt if time is at all short. The largest of them is Burnham Market, prettily situated in its chalky valley and with a large and pleasant looking church. The churches at Norton and Deepdale are partly Norman and the former boasts a round tower.

Burnham Deepdale is hardly left behind when one finds oneself in Brancaster, once a place of considerable importance as the northernmost of the chain of stations under the command of the Count of the Saxon Shore. The camp was square, and 570 feet from side to side, but the walls long formed a quarry for local building and the stranger to the district might be pardoned

Burnham Thorpe
C. 1820

for passing right over the site of the fortress without being aware of its existence.

A quiet, happy little corner of Norfolk this. Here it is that the long range of chalk which continues the line of the Chilterns finally runs to the sea, and the scenery is pleasantly varied and undulating. But one wonders whether it was always so quiet, the question being prompted by the fact that such an insignificant village as Holme-next-the-sea—you will gather from the suffixes that the shore is at least a mile from the village!—could hardly have been the objective of the Peddar's Way, that mysterious thoroughfare which runs straight as a lance from Castle Acre, with barely a break throughout its twenty miles to Holme. It has been loosely conjectured that it was a means of communication between Castle Acre and Brancaster; and indeed it may have been used for that purpose—one could imagine its very straightness appealing to the Romans, but it could hardly have been built for that purpose by them, else they would have taken it to Brancaster and not to a point some miles west of it. So that it seems clear that if the Romans used Peddar's Way they found it here when they arrived, and that in any case the Way seems to have had no direct connection with Brancaster.

One solution is suggested by the discovery off the coast hereabouts of the submerged remains of a forest that is said to have extended right across to Lincolnshire. The diameter of some of the trees is sufficient indication of its age; while an even more dramatic indication of the remote period to which the forest belonged was afforded by the discovery of a tree trunk into which a stone implement was wedged. That must have been a thrilling moment for the fortu-

nate discoverer! Far more moving than the discovery of a burial urn or traces of fires.

If the forest extended to Lincolnshire, why not the Peddar's Way? Certain it is that great coastal changes have taken place along this shore even during living memory, and that apart from the sea-wall: what changes may not have occurred in the two thousand years since Cæsar first landed in Kent?

Meanwhile, the Peddar's Way stretches its lonely miles along the western edge of the chalk uplands, awaiting the day when its secret shall be surprised.

Before passing on, Holme Church is worth looking into for the sake of a splendid brass inscribed "Henry Notynham and his Wyffe lyne her yt madden thys Church Stepull and Queer." The brass is of importance as the earliest on which the inscription is in English.

So to Hunstanton. First the railway and then the motor have conspired to make a flourishing resort out of the formerly remote village of "Hunston"; or rather, should we say, have brought into being an entirely new place which has adopted the old name and which has set up new standards. This is by no means a disadvantageous procedure, since the isolation of the new from the old allows the old to preserve its character. In so many places one regrets the modernization simply because it is so infectious. One building here and there rebuilt will be hardly noticed, perhaps, but when Mr. A observes that Mr. B has had his place refronted with mahogany and plate glass and a tesselated pavement thrown in, nothing will satisfy Mr. B until his shop is the exact image of Mr. A's. And it is not long ere Mr. C begins to take a hand in the game—if, indeed, he has not already done so.

Hunstanton is one of the few places in Norfolk

which can boast of chalk cliffs. Not lofty white walls as at Beachy Head, for instance, but high enough to afford a splendid outlook over the Wash to where a slender finger on the skyline marks the opposite shore and the visibility of the renowned "stump" of Boston.

Along the cliff are some indeterminate mounds reputed to be remains of a chapel built by St. Edmund when he landed here from Germany in 855 and proceeded to learn the whole Book of Psalms by heart. . . . Certainly the young man—he was but 15—might have chosen many worse spots even for such a pleasurable task.

Hunstanton has for centuries been the home of the Le Strange family and in the church in the old village are the tombs of many of them. It is hardly to be expected that five centuries of epitaph writers could resist a pun on the family name, and there, sure enough, we read:

> In heaven at home. O blessed change!
> Who while I was on earth was Strange!

The most notable occupant of the fine old Hall which adjoins the church was that Sir Roger who after Lynn had been captured by the Parliamentarians decided to retake it for the King. Unfortunately his plans were discovered before they became effective, and from Hunstanton Sir Roger went to Newgate. Only for a short time, however, for he escaped, and ere long returned—via the Continent—and became responsible for a number of pamphlets in which the King's enemies were attacked with considerable vigour. He also founded the *Public Intelligencer* (the forerunner of the London *Gazette*) and became "Licenser of the Press."

Hunstanton has much to interest the geologist. The cliffs exhibit in turn bands of the Lower Greensand (here known as Carstone) ; the Red Chalk, and the more common Chalk marls. All these beds are highly fossiliferous.

A very pleasant and invigorating walk from Hunstanton is over Ringstead Downs to Heacham, of peculiar interest on account of the fact that for centuries it has been associated with that family of Rolfes of whom one member married the Virginian Princess Pocahontas.

Although attempts have been made to cast doubt upon her story, there is good reason to believe Captain John Smith's account of the manner in which he was captured and brought before the chief Powhatan, who immediately sentenced him to execution. The unfortunate captain was seized, and his head laid on a stone slab, while the executioner stood ready with his death-dealing club, when Powhatan's daughter Pocahontas laid her own head on Smith's, and by the act saved his life. After various further adventures she married John Rolfe in 1614 and with him came to England a year or so later. She died at the very moment of embarkation from these shores, and lies buried in Gravesend churchyard.

From Hunstanton we have been going southward, and have had the unusual experience, while on the East Coast of England, of having open water to the *west*.

Snettisham demands a brief halt. Its church has a west front that is a reproduction of that of Peterborough Cathedral. Another remarkable feature that will be apparent long before the village is reached is the prevalence of the local version of the Lower Green-

sand which is known in these parts as Carstone and forms a popular building material.

Once more we set out southwards and in a couple of miles come to Dersingham, a prettily placed village from which we may make our way to the Norwich Gates of Sandringham.

It is rather illustrative of British monarchical ideals that of the royal residences only Windsor is a Castle. Balmoral, Buckingham Palace and Sandringham are (and Osborne House was) residences rather than the frowning strongholds visitors from lands avowedly more "democratic" than ours have been led to expect; and of that group Sandringham is easily superior to the others in its suggestion of the simple dignity which in the mind of the average Englishman surrounds the royal household, as opposed to the scarcely veiled militarism with which the thrones of other lands are invested. And this suggestion is borne out as one strolls through those portions of the grounds the public are privileged to visit. Every few steps one encounters some reminder, great or small, of the real affection in which the Royal house is held by its subjects and in particular by those subjects who serve on the Sandringham estate.

It will suffice here to mention merely one such example—the Queen's Nest. The story of this lovely little retreat is as follows. During 1913, when Queen Alexandra was in residence in London, she became aware that her old and hitherto exemplary servant Sir Dighton Probyn was frequently not at his post. Cautious inquiry led to the information that at such times he was to be found at Sandringham; but concerning his occupation while there not a word could be gleaned. Then, at last, the aged Sir Dighton Pro-

byn invited his royal mistress to view the results of his frequent visits in secret to Sandringham—this beautiful little rock garden, which he described as " a surprise offering from Her Majesty's very devoted old servant."

And this high regard on the part of servants is matched by the regard in which they were held by those they served. The church and the churchyard abound in memorials to servants of the estate ; even shepherds are commemorated as friends rather than as underlings.

I must confess that this side of Sandringham appeals to me more, perhaps, than some of the costly and elaborate memorials also to be found in the church, though to be sure some of them are poignant enough. I have no sympathy with those who come to Sandringham to " do " the church and grounds, ticking off each memorial and burial-plate until their list is exhausted and they are free to hie away to Norwich, where they will contrive to digest that city, together with their tea, in something like fifty minutes.

I am aware that I ought, perhaps, to make detailed mention of the many features to be seen here—the silver altar and its cunning electric lighting scheme, but I prefer to retain memories of Sandringham as bright and colourful as its glorious gardens ; a very haven of friendships.

It may be added that the place had a history of its own before King Edward VII, then Prince of Wales, purchased the estate in 1861. The manor was mentioned in Domesday, at which time the name was rendered " Sant-Dersingham " : a matter which will provide food for the thought of the place-name enthusiast. To detail the many changes of ownership from

then until last century would be tedious and not very profitable, but it should be explained that the present House is a creation of quite modern times, having been built by King Edward when it was discovered that the house existing in 1861 was inadequate for the entertainments contemplated.

Fortalice-hunters who are disappointed with the peaceful, residential appearance of Sandringham should be satisfied with the prospect of Castle Rising, which lies on the Lynn Road, a mile or so south-west of the Sandringham estate. Standing within huge earthworks and approached by a bridge that is itself suggestive of hand-to-hand fights between defenders and attackers, Castle Rising is one of the best preserved of our Norman Keeps. At first sight, it might be wondered why anyone should go to the trouble of fortifying such a position; but in days gone by the reason would have been clear enough, for then the shores of the Wash extended to the walls of Rising, which flourished as a port.

CASTLE RISING CHURCH.

As a seaport it went out of business long ago, but within the last hundred years it was a corporate borough, and was, moreover, represented at Westminster by two Members of Parliament until well into the nineteenth century, although a writer of those days remarked that "at an election half a dozen names appear on the poll-book, but it is questionable whether, except the rector of the parish, there be a single legal voter!" However, the Reform Bill put an end to the

disproportionate representation of Castle Rising, and the parish seems to have slumbered peacefully and undisturbed since that day to this.

Sleepy though its surroundings may be, and venerable as it is itself, the Norman Keep of Castle Rising has a warlike air that cannot be denied, and one according well with a list of owners including the Black Prince and Richard II. A sufficiently stirring legend is associated, too, with its founder, William D'Albini. Of this gentleman Dugdale tells us that he so excelled at a joust held in Paris by the dowager Queen of France that she "became exceedingly enamoured of him, and forthwith invited him to a costly banquet," afterwards offering him marriage. Unfortunately, Albini was already engaged to marry an English lady, and this he endeavoured, not very successfully, to explain to the affronted Frenchwoman, who thereupon "grew so discontented that she consulted with her maids how she might take away his life; and in pursuance with that design enticed him into a garden where there was a secret cave and in it a fierce lion." Having introduced him to the cave, the lady then took an unfair advantage of her knowledge of a certain door and slipped out, leaving the hapless d'Albini caged with the "fierce lion." Fortunately d'Albini was a man of resource, and when the lion approached him he put his hand "into the mouth of the beast and pulled out his tongue by the root. Which done," Dugdale delightfully concludes, "he followed the Queen to the palace and gave it to one of her maids to present it to her!"

Somehow I mistrust Dugdale's rounding off of the incident, appropriate as it is; but the sequel has passed into history: how Albini returned to England, and—

presumably as a reward for his feat—was created Earl of Arundel and given as his crest the lion which still figures on the Howard arms.

Rather curiously, another Queen of France is also connected with the history of Castle Rising, for here dwelt for some years Isabella, mother of Edward III "the She-Wolf of France." Modern opinion inclines to the belief that her stay was not the strict imprisonment formerly suggested, but a prisoner of sorts she undoubtedly was, notwithstanding visits to Walsingham and even to London.

If you should happen to be at Castle Rising on a Sunday you will possibly encounter some old ladies who will make you wonder whether you have not strayed by mistake into a remote Welsh village, or, alternatively, the scene of an Eisteddfod, for one of the conditions of residence in the Bede House founded here by a Howard who lived in the seventeenth century is attendance at Sunday morning service clad in blue gowns, bright red capes and tall beaver hats of the kind popularly supposed to be worn by witches. Other conditions of residence there are, to be sure. Each of the twelve inmates must be "religious, grave and discreet, a single woman, of fifty years of age at least, no common beggar, harlot, scold, drunkard, haunter of taverns, inns or alehouses." Thoroughly deserving cases, in fact.

Space will not permit more than a passing reference to Rising Church, the glories of which are plainly proclaimed by the building itself directly it springs into sight. Of Norman origin it retains much pure and interesting Norman work: the west front, the font and the tower are among the most remarkable features.

Lynn is a rather intriguing blend of the old and the new—much of what is old about it being very admirable, much of what is new less open to admiration. It is for this reason that many who spend only an hour or two in Lynn bring away from it an adverse impression; the sensations aroused by the more venerable items having to some extent been swamped by the modern and rather unattractive streets by which one often passes from sight to sight.

But no one who has seen the Customs House revealed as the sun chases away the morning mists from the river, or who has strolled on an October afternoon in the Tuesday Market Square and partaken of the feast of colour provided by time-mellowed brickwork and yellowing leaves, or at sunset has stood at the end of the silent nave of the neighbouring church of St. Nicholas—no one who has had these experiences will be inclined to vote King's Lynn as mediocre.

Why *King's* Lynn? It is customary to reply that the royal prefix was added when at the Reformation it passed from the ownership of the Bishop of Norwich and became a possession of the Seventh Henry. Why the bishops of Norwich were at such pains to make it clear that the place was Lynn Episcopi is less easily explained; the more so since the parish church was one of those erected by the Norman Losinga as a penance for his sin of purchasing the see. Lynn Episcopi it was, however, and King's Lynn it is; though for a large radius around it is no more than Lynn.

The church that Losinga built has almost entirely disappeared, but St. Margaret's still preserves some good Norman work in its towers, and although the nave is no older than the eighteenth century, when it was rebuilt after a spire had crashed down on to it

from the south tower, the interior has a certain nobility that cannot be denied. Among the features which have successfully eluded the restorer are some misericords in the choir stalls.

Ecclesiologists will not need to be told that there are brasses in the church, for the brasses of Lynn are famous. Large and of exquisite Flemish workmanship, they are to be found at the west end. They have the distinction of being decorated with pictorial work. On that to Adam de Walsoken dated 1349 various people are shown engaged in gathering grapes ; and on that of Robert Braunche, 1364, a feast, presumed to be that given by that gentleman to Edward III when he visited Lynn, what time Braunche was mayor. If anything were required to indicate that this is not merely a conventional representation it is found in the figure of one of the guests who is shown as so eager to satisfy his lusts that he is actually climbing over the table to get at a succulent peacock being brought in ! One cannot resist the speculation that the brass does depict a feast that actually took place ; and one wonders who was the greedy gentleman that his impetuosity should have made so deep an impression upon the worthy Braunche and his contemporaries ?

THE TOWERS, LYNN.

Not many towns of like size have such a church as St. Margaret's ; certainly few are able to add another of the like of St. Nicholas, but ere leaving the

Saturday Market Place over which St. Margaret's presides attention is certain to be drawn by the building over the way with the splendid flint chequer work. This is Lynn's Town Hall, and if you enter its Elizabethan porch you may have the fortune to see some of Lynn's treasures: the Red Book—dating from the early fourteenth century and said to be the oldest paper book in the land—and the sword and cup said to have been presented to the city by the luckless John on the eve of the journey which has endeared him to generations of schoolboys on account of the report that he lost his jewels "in the Wash." According to Walter Rye, the sword and cup did belong to a King John, but to him of France who for a short time was associated with Castle Rising.

One memory is worth recalling ere we leave St. Margaret's. In the latter half of the eighteenth century its organist was one Dr. Burney, who not only found time to write his *History of Music* here, but had the fortune to be so appreciated by his fellow townsfolk that they decided to increase his salary of £100 by one-fifth "as an encouragement to remain and teach musick in the town." Dr. Burney is less remembered to-day than his daughter Frances, who was born at Lynn on June 14, 1752, in due time became Madame D'Arblay and delighted the world with Eveline, Cecilia and the ever-entertaining *Diary*.

Close to the more noble Tuesday Market is the Church of St. Nicholas, officially but a chapel of ease to St. Margaret's, but in many ways a more admirable building. Its beautifully decorated south porch figures in many a book on architecture and, I suspect, in many a sketch book and photograph album, for it is conveyed with comparative facility to paper. But the interior

of the church strikes a note far less easy to deal with justly; there is a venerable grace and dignity that is missing from St. Margaret's and which is, to my mind, more in harmony with the general character of Lynn—or at any rate of what I have ventured to dub the more admirable portions of the town.

The roof, the east and west windows, the font cover and various monuments will claim interest. One gravestone will certainly give the visitor pause, for it commemorates no less a name than Robinson Crusoe: not, however, the hero of Defoe's great work, but a worthy citizen of Lynn.

An amusing example of the happy manner in which "business and pleasure" were combined in days gone by—and are still, for that matter, though in more subtle form—is the epitaph to one Hollingworth: "An eminent bookseller, a man of the strictest integrity in his dealings and much esteemed by gentlemen of taste for the neatness and elegance of his binding." One looks instinctively for the further announcement that the business is now carried on by his son at the old address, and all orders, etc. . . !

From the Tuesday Market Place one passes by a street still retaining some good house-fronts to what many consider the gem of King's Lynn—the Custom House. It is said to have been built originally as an exchange for merchants towards the end of the seventeenth century. Very beautiful are its proportions, and the little dormer windows in the roof give it an air reminiscent of the Low Countries.

One of the surprising things about Lynn is that although it is a seaport, the town bears really very few marks of the sea. Here and there will be found a shop making a special appeal to mariners, but on

the whole Lynn would pass more as a blend of a cathedral city and a market town than as a seaport. Occasionally, however, one does come upon traces of a long and prosperous connection with the sea. Lynn has in fact been a port since Saxon days, having the double advantage of inland waterway communication with such places as Brandon, Thetford, Cambridge and Ely, as well as easy access to the North Sea. Only a few minutes' walk from St. Margaret's Church is a delightful old hostelry suggestively named the "Greenland Fishery" Inn; and so long ago as the fourteenth century one Nicholas of Lynn anticipated Peary in his discovery of the North Pole. Moreover, he brought back far more interesting descriptions than those of the wide icefields of which modern explorers write and speak so vividly, for Nicholas found at the Pole nothing less than "the four indraughts of the Ocean, from the four opposite quarters of the world."

If they did not succeed in finding the indraught of the oceans, the mariners of Lynn can be fairly credited with knowledge of the four quarters of the world, and although the construction of larger docks elsewhere has attracted the larger shipping of our day to other ports, Lynn still carries on a useful and busy trade with the Continent.

There may be those who dispute the opinion that the Custom House is the architectural gem of Lynn, and who will direct you to the Red Mount, which lies amid the trees and sward of The Walks, over by the Railway Station. And lest you are inclined to dismiss the claim directly you come in sight of the Red Mount I would urge you to do your utmost to see the inside of this curious building, for it is as delightfully unlike the plain and uninviting exterior as could well be

Grey Friars Tower, King's Lynn
1809

imagined. It was erected towards the end of the fifteenth century as a wayside shrine for pilgrims bound Walsinghamwards, and on passing up the stairs within one is confronted with an astonishingly beautiful little chapel. It has been well described by E. M. Beloe: "It is so diminutive that it seems an error to apply the ordinary names to its parts, and yet it is perfect in its proportions. From the four central angles of the crossing rise four vaults, which dome-like meet in the centre, with the arches of its four sides larger in section, emphasizing the form of the dome. The transepts and the quasi-nave are each 7 feet 2 inches across and 3 feet 6 inches deep, and these, as well as the choir, are pointed waggon-vaulted in stone, the choir having four and the others two compartments each. The details are all of great beauty. . . . The extreme smallness of the chapel would admit but a small number of worshippers; this is remedied by three hagioscopes, so that those in the passage could see the elevation of the Host and join in the service."

The Red Mount overlooks the London Road, which has three features of various interest. The farthest is the South Gate, a stout little fortress which has fortunately been spared from destruction by the diversion of the highway. Near the gate notice the highly libellous sign of "The Honest Lawyer," who like "The Silent Woman" carries his head beneath his arm! The Roman Catholic Church is of interest on account of its model of the shrine of Our Lady which drew countless pilgrims to Walsingham.

A red brick lantern supported on four arches is the sole graceful relic of a Franciscan priory founded here in the thirteenth century. It has seen some strange

sights in its time, and could probably supply some interesting comments to Hood's lines:

> Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn
> Through the cold and heavy mist;
> And Eugene Aram walked between
> With gyves upon his wrist.

Aram was for some time usher at the Grammar School, then conducted in a chapel against St. Margaret's Church, but which was later moved to a building overlooking London Road and in recent years to a very fine building on the Gaywood Road designed by Basil Champneys.

A Lincolnshire Byway.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LANDS OF THE WASH

Rising was a seaport town
When Lynn was but a marsh.

THUS one of the minor poets, backed by undoubted historical evidence, and as you set out from Lynn to cross into Holland you perceive that only by incessant labour is Lynn restrained from lapsing to its former condition. All around is flat, low land, from which the sea is excluded only by strong and extensive embankments, and this embanking is still going on. There are embankments made by the Romans, and there are embankments made by German prisoners during the Great War; and if you read Dugdale's immense work on the *History of Imbanking* you will realize how unceasing the labour has been in the interval between those two periods.

The story of the Bedford Level, which epitomizes one of the great romances of our land, is told in a later chapter: here we will just set out on a sightseeing jaunt.

As the road returns alongside the Ouse to West Lynn, we get a good view of the old town across the water and are better able to appreciate, from this

aspect, the importance of its maritime interests. Then we turn our back on Lynn and set out across the marshes. Clenchwarton is passed, and we come to Terrington St. Clement, with a glorious church. It is pure Perpendicular, with notable clerestories and a south porch. The feature that attracted me most inside the church was the painted font cover, of a kind seldom encountered in these days. It is noticeable that the tower of the church is detached: the reason being, it is thought, that originally the tower served as a place of refuge during the incursions of raiders from overseas.

Terrington seems secure enough from the sea nowadays, but it was not always so. In the time of Edward III the floods were so serious that a special abatement of taxes was granted to the inhabitants of the district, the sea, as Dugdale tells us, being "so outrageous that it broke the banks in sundry places, drowned many cattle and spoiled a great quantity of corn," a disaster that occurred with tragic frequency until modern drainage and embanking resulted in a measure of security.

Terrington is memorable to Cambridge men since it was a fourteenth-century rector of the parish who founded Gonville Hall, later refounded by Dr. Caius as Gonville and Caius College, familiarly "Keys."

At the western end of Terrington St. Clement our road goes off on the left, to Wisbech. It has already been noticed, perhaps, that there are two Terringtons within a short distance; and this amiable habit of duplication is repeated in the case of the Walpoles, which we shortly encounter. It was from these Walpoles that the famous family we have met at Houghton derived their name.

As we run into Walpole St. Andrew there will be observed on the right, parallel with the road, the great earthen wall erected by the Romans and still known as the Roman Bank, but an even more interesting historical association clings to the village, for this is held to be the site of the disastrous crossing undertaken by King John in 1216. There is nothing much to cross to-day until you come to the canalized Nene, but in John's time the Wash extended much farther inland than now.

Walpole St. Andrew is succeeded by Walpole St. Peter in our itinerary: to reach it it is necessary to leave the main road for an embanked way across the fields. It is a pretty little village, with a tree-embowered church containing much beautiful woodwork and a chancel so well provided with windows that it has been described as a "lanthorn of glass." Before leaving the church you must seek out the Hickathrift stone, on the outside of the north wall. Of this gentleman let Dugdale speak. "Now in Marshland there is a famous plain called the Smeeth, which being common to all towns thereon maintained at least 30,000 sheep; and yet it is not of a larger extent, in the widest part of it, than two English miles. In old times the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages had a fierce conflict with one Hickafric (then owner of it) touching the bounds thereof; which grew so hot that at length it came to blows. Hickafric, being a person of extraordinary stature and carriage, took an axle-tree from a cart, instead of a sword; and the wheel for a buckler, and being so armed most stout repelled those bold invaders." As indeed any man might who was capable of wielding an axle-tree!

Tilney Smeeth has long been famous for its richness,

and the folk of the Marshland have long been proud of it; in which connection a neat yarn is related concerning James I's reception of the rather "tall" story that a stick laid on the ground overnight would in the morning be so covered with grass as to be invisible. Quoth James, dryly, that he knew some grounds in Scotland where, if a *horse* were put in overnight, they could not find him in the morning!

Wisbech Church.

But Hickathrift is not the only remarkable personage connected with Walpole St. Peter, for here was born St. Goderic, who after a comparatively adventurous life became a hermit, dying in 1170. Of his saintliness curiously little seems to have been handed down, but that he was a man of some force of character can be gleaned from the by no means irrelevant scrap of knowledge which assures us that he wore out three suits of *iron* clothes!

Wisbech is a very busy little place beside the canalized Nene. It is at its most characteristic on a market day, but at other times it can provide plenty of interest in its church, with remarkable decorations, and its museum. Wisbech also has associations with Thomas Clarkson, whose name is remembered less to-day, one fears, than it deserves, in view of his great efforts for the abolition of slavery. He was born at Wisbech

in 1760, and it is said that his attention was first drawn to slavery as he was engaged in composing a Latin essay on the theme " Anne liceat invitos in servitutem dare ? "

There is an amusing anecdote concerning Clarkson in the *Suffolk Garland*. Bernard Barton had sent him a congratulatory ode in connection with his philanthropic endeavours. The tribute was acknowledged by Catherine Clarkson, who wrote, said Barton, that she would " treasure the verses up for herself ; but her good man was so little of a poetical amateur that when he had a similar tribute once forwarded to him in the form of an ode the poet was forced to promise him a prose translation ! "

When Hilaire Belloc visited Wisbech he " read in a book descriptive of the place that a whale had come to Wisbeach once, and I considered that a whale coming up to Wisbeach on a tide would certainly stay there ; not indeed for the delights of the town (of which I say nothing) but because there would be no room to turn round ; and a whale cannot swim backwards."

Not only whales but boats of any size are similarly incommoded by the form of the river at Wisbech. It is narrow and runs between steep sides—and at times the tide races through the trough-like channel as through a mill-race.

Mr. Belloc solved the difficulty of turning round by taking train back towards the sea from Wisbech, and by train or by road we too can quickly get to Sutton Bridge or to Long Sutton. From either of these places we can make our way by devious routes to the last of the series of embankments dividing the Marshland from the Wash. Hither came Hilaire Belloc from

Wisbech, and in *Hills and the Sea* we read how the scene appeared to him :

" I have heard of the great lakes, especially of the marshes at the mouth of the Volga, in the Caspian, where the two elements are for miles indistinguishable, and where no one can speak of a shore ; but here the thing is more marvellous, because it is the true sea. You have, I say, the true sea, with great tides and bearing ships, and seaports to which the ships can go ; and on the other side you have, inhabited, an ancient land. There should be a demarcation between them, a tide mark or limit. There is nothing. You cannot say where one begins and the other ends. . . ."

Long Sutton is noted for its church, a remarkably fine building in the Norman and Early English styles. Early English is the tower, oddly placed at the south-west corner of the church and crowned with a lead-covered wooden spire " supported " by four miniature spirelets by way of pinnacles at the corners.

Having tramped out to the edge of the Wash, one is glad to find oneself again at Sutton and in touch with civilization ; not nearly so glad, however, as that unfortunate party who came across from Walpole in 1216 and falteringly informed the raging John that his treasury had been lost in the crossing. You may think it worth while to go in search of the house in which the monarch is said to have rested ere continuing his journey.

An exceedingly pretty road leads westward from Sutton to Holbeach. It is noteworthy, by the way, that although the map-makers, railway companies and the Postmaster-General all spell Wisbech without an a in the second syllable, the word is frequently pronounced and often spelt locally as Wis*beach* ; Holbeach

retains the a, so that there is no doubt as to the pronunciation.

Cobbett thought very highly of the land about Holbeach. It is, he said, "a neat little town, lying in the midst of some of the richest land in the world; with a most beautiful church with a spire, like that of Ross 'pointing to the skies'; gardens very pretty, fruit trees in abundance, and land dark in colour and as fine in substance as flour." With that description there is little to quarrel to-day, and the visitor may see for himself the splendid Decorated church, with its rather curious north porch.

There are those who can find nothing attractive in the flat marshlands extending from Holbeach towards the sea, and no doubt at certain seasons it is sufficiently unattractive, not to say repellent. But seen on a fine windy day in March, when the sky is painted the fresh blue of spring and the enormous masses of snow-white cloud sail steadfastly along, above a band of slightly darker blue against which trees, churches and farms are silhouetted with marvellous clearness, this land is very good. And its churches are second to none even in Lincolnshire. If I seem to pass lightly over such churches as those of Whaplode, Moulton and half-a-dozen others, it is simply for fear that these pages would become little more than a catalogue of notable porches, towers, window tracery and other features seen here almost at their best.

The colour of the landscape through which we have been passing since we left Lynn will have varied according to the time of year; but in due season mustard is grown here on a most extensive scale, and having seen in turn Norwich and the fine place at Corton built by the late Mr. Colman we are in a fair

position to invent an East Anglian parable of the grain of mustard seed!

You may have the fortune to see a crop of *Isatis tinctoria*—better known as the woad from which our ancestors of long ago concocted the glass of fashion and the mould of form. It has long ceased to be used to any extent as a dye itself, but is occasionally employed to set up the reductive fermentation utilized in dyeing by means of indigo.

SPALDING CHURCH.

So to Spalding, a busy market town on the Welland, much concerned with the raising of potatoes. It has also set out to rival Holland and the Scilly Isles as a bulb-raising centre, while still more recently it has become a centre of the sugar-beet industry. This, practically unknown in England before the War, has during the last decade attained huge dimensions. In 1922 there were but 8,000 acres under cultivation for beet in the whole of England; four years later the acreage had increased to 125,000, and since then, thanks to Government support, still further land has been turned over to the beet. It is, of course, by virtue of the exceptionally rich ground that the district has become so intimately connected with the prosperity of this new industry.

Spalding stands on the river Welland, and some of the prettiest glimpses of the town are those from the banks of the stream as it meanders on to the Wash.

Here and there the houses come right down to the water; and here and there this feature has more than a touch of the Continental in its aspect.

The glory of the place, architecturally, is its church, a truly splendid building of such a width that its ground plan, with a few modifications, would be square, instead of the customary rectangle.

The church originated in a Benedictine priory founded here in the eleventh century, and of which a few remains may still be seen; but the present church is a thirteenth-century building. Its curious plan was arrived at in the following manner: originally it was a cruciform building with nave and aisles, but as in such a form it was insufficient to meet the needs of Spalding secondary aisles were added in the angles made by the transept with the nave and chancel.

Very pleasant views of the church are obtained from the grounds of Ayscough Fee Hall, a fifteenth-century house containing a museum and intimately connected with that honourable institution, the Spalding Gentleman's Society, founded in 1710. It was at one time the residence of Maurice Johnson, who in addition to founding the Gentleman's Society also had much to do with the founding of the Society of Antiquaries. Stukely, a more famous antiquarian, was also an East Anglian and was born at Holbeach.

Spalding is the south-west point of the ground covered in this chapter: from now on our watchword shall be "northward ho!" We must halt at Pinchbeck, however, for the usual reason—in these parts—of a church well worth examination, and also because of its name. Pinchbeck, the encyclopædia informs me, is "a kind of brass composed of approximately 90 per cent. of copper and 10 per cent. zinc, formerly used

for imitating gold for cheap jewellery. So named from Christopher Pinchbeck, a watchmaker of the eighteenth century, by whom it was invented." Christopher was by no means the first of the Pinchbecks—there is in the church here a fine tomb to Sir Thomas Pinchbeck, who died two hundred years before the time of Christopher—so that it seems beyond doubt that the name of the place passed, via Christopher, to the shoddy gold and so to a permanent place in the English language ; the place-name was not bestowed in uncomplimentary allusion to the habits of the people of Pinchbeck !

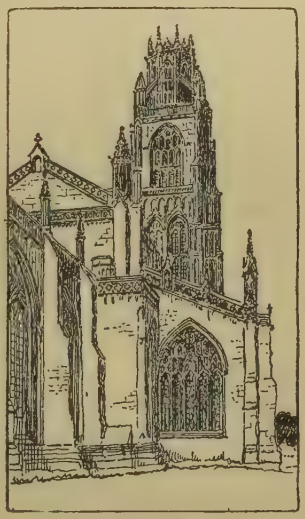
And the " lode " at Whaplode is no more a mineral vein than Pinchbeck. Christopher Marlowe assures us that " originally a lode was an artificial cut through tangled swamp by which barges and even seagoing vessels could reach ports on the mainland. A drove is similar to a lode, save that it denotes a pathway along the top of the bank in addition to a waterway ; thus you meet with North Drove, French Drove and South Drove, each connected with the main highways."

But if we were to discuss the many engaging place-names scattered o'er the half-inch map of Lincolnshire we should never resume our interrupted journey northward ! Perhaps the most curious cross-roads lie about five miles north-west of Frithville. Go northward from this point and you come to New York ; go southward and you will strike Boston, while enquiry or reference to the map will show that the cross-road itself is at Bunker's Hill ! But it is to be feared that however satisfying Boston may be in itself, it hardly matches the bustle of its namesake in Massachusetts, while if ever a New York deserved to be called, however

endearingly, "li'l ol'," it is the New York in Lincolnshire.

Donington has a church with a magnificent tower and spire rising 240 feet above the flat lands of Bicker and forming a notable landmark hereabouts.

Boston, Lincs., may not compare with Boston, Mass., but there is surely nothing in the whole of the State of Massachusetts to rival the Stump of the Lincolnshire town. It looked across the sea to us at Hunstanton; again from Castle Rising it renewed its invitation to come and admire it at closer quarters, and from half a hundred points on our westward journey it has peered like a pillar of hope before us. There is nothing quite like Boston Stump in the whole of England, and it is a fortunate thing for us that it was built on such a site. What a tragedy if it had been as circumscribed by buildings as Bentley's Byzantine campanile at Westminster!



Boston Church.

Of the age of Boston no man can speak with certainty, but we have it on the authority of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* that it was in 654 that "Botolph began to build that minster at Icanhoe" of which the only remaining trace is in the name of the town —"Botolfston" is a thirteenth-century rendering.

Leland was less happy in his spelling of the name, though he contrives with no little skill and charm to draw a picture of the town in the sixteenth century that is worth recalling. "Bosstolphstoune stondeth harde on the river. The greate and chefiest parte of the toune is on the este syde of the river, where is a faire market place and a crosse with a square toure. Al the buyldings of this side of the toune is fayre, and Marchuntes duelle in it, and a staple of wolle is used there. There is a bridg of wood to cum over the river, into this parte of the toune, the stream of which is sumtymes as swifte as it were an arrow. On the west syde of the river is one long strete. On the same syde is White Freies."

The "paroche chirch," as Leland styles it, was begun in the early years of the fourteenth century. It is a wonderfully spacious building, seeming even larger within than it really is on account of the slenderness of the pillars separating the nave from the aisles; and this sense of breadth is increased by the disproportionate lowness of the nave ceiling.

But it is the Stump which claims chief attention. Rising to within a dozen feet of the 300, it is indeed a noble work, though how much it owes to the genius who added the lantern it is difficult to say. It would have been a notable tower if crowned by the four pinnacles which still rise above the third storey; the addition of the lantern carried the building, architecturally, at a bound from the rank of a parish church to that of a cathedral. It bears more than a passing likeness to the lofty campaniles of the Netherlands, and, like them, has its bell-ringing tradition, though it seems that the tradition was founded less firmly on fact than many folk supposed, since "Enderby," which

Jean Ingelow cited as the "alarm signal," pealed from the tower on the approach of flood or the terror by fire, was not written until *after* it had become famous through the poem describing "The High Tide on the Lincolnshire Coast!"

At the base of the tower will be seen the cuts marking the extent of various floods which have imperilled the town, and with these vivid reminders of what flood meant to Boston and the surrounding district before us we may well recall how——

> The old mayor climbed the belfry tower,
> The ringers rang by two, by three.
> "Pull, if ye never pulled before;
> Good ringers, pull your best," quoth he.
> "Play uppe, play uppe, O Boston bells!
> Ply all your changes, all your swells,
> Play up 'the Brides of Enderby.'"

It is only appropriate that a melody which has taken such a prominent part in the traditions of the town should be preserved, and as you make your way through the streets of Boston and across the surrounding marshland you will hear the carillon telling forth "The Brides of Enderby" several times during the day, though no longer with the dread significance imputed by Jean Ingelow.

The tower is still used as a landmark by fishermen and other folk navigating the hazardous waters of the Wash, a purpose it has served for centuries. Long ago it used also to serve as a lighthouse by night, thus very beautifully combining the practical with the symbolical.

At times, too, another light would gleam from the Stump, amplifying the grim warning of the bells:

I marked the lofty beacon light
Stream from the church tower, red and high—
A lurid mark and dread to see;
And awesome bells they were to me
That in the dark rang "Enderby."

Of the interior of the church the principal features are the tablet to Henry Hallam, the historian, whose son Arthur Henry Hallam has a monument more enduring than stone in the pages of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*; and the misericords in the chancel. There are no fewer than sixty-four stalls here, nearly every one being carved with skill allied to a very lively sense of humour. Among the best is one on the south side showing a man returning from an unsuccessful hunt and being met by his wife, who is showing her disapproval of his empty bag by grabbing him by the chin and belabouring him with her distaff. Another on the same side shows a wolf in cope and alb richly trimmed with lace, holding a pastoral staff in his hand. He is seated on his throne, and at his side is his chaplain, a fox, with a ruff round his neck and holding an open book with evident desire to appear pious. There are many others, all of them worth examination, and all of them providing a fascinating sidelight on everyday life of bygone centuries.

Two "sons" of Boston have won an enduring place in literature. One of them is commemorated by a brass in the chancel of the church—John Conington who died in 1869 and whose life-labour was his edition of Virgil. He is also known for his edition of Æschylus's *Agamemnon* and the *Cheophoræ* as well as for a number of lesser works, such as translations of the Odes and Satires of Horace—altogether a very remarkable

output for a man who died at the comparatively early age of forty-four.

A Bostonian famed in a very different department of literature is John Foxe, born here in 1516 and who early developed a bitter antipathy to the Catholic party. His *Acts and Monuments* spring from a *History of the Christian Persecutions* which he began, it is said, at the suggestion of Lady Jane Grey. It was first published at Basle in 1559, and included within the same covers were Foxe's plea for toleration and treatises on the Eucharist by Hooper, Ridley, Latimer and Cranmer. The first English edition of the *Acts*, more generally known as *The Book of Martyrs*, appeared in 1563 ; it has never been rivalled as a history of the martyrs, although as a record of facts it is quite untrustworthy.

But the most famous Bostonian was that John Cotton who in 1612 became its vicar, and speedily got into trouble on account of his Nonconformist views. Eventually he decided to leave the country, to escape the Laudian persecutions, and in 1633 he set sail with a party of friends for America. They arrived at a place then known as Trimountain, which was renamed Boston out of veneration of the place from which they had come. Cotton took a prominent part in framing the civil laws of the state of Massachusetts, but in his later years appears to have altered his religious opinions considerably, for in 1647, during a dispute with Roger Williams, we find him " advocating the very principles which had caused his own banishment."

It was from Boston that, thirty years before Cotton's emigration, the *Mayflower* had sailed. Lincolnshire was the centre of the Puritan movement, Gainsborough and Scrooby having been the sites of the first Meet-

ing Houses established in this country. The State of Massachusetts had its origin in the amalgamation of the Pilgrim Fathers—who had sailed for America in 1620—and Cotton's party of Puritans, and when the Cotton Chapel in the church at Boston, Lincs., was restored last century some three-quarters of the cost was contributed by the people of Boston, Mass.

Another link exists between the two Bostons—accidental, and rather curious. Boston "over there," I believe, claims to have published the first regular newspaper. The claim may or may not be admissible, but the English Boston has a very definite connection with the development of newspapers in the person of Herbert Ingram, who was born here and who founded the *Illustrated London News*, "the first serious attempt at English illustrated journalism." That was in 1842, and the present state of that paper is adequate proof of the soundness of Ingram's ideas; although he first published it at the, to us, curious price of *fivepence* per copy. And, last in a strange series of links between "new" Boston and old, this son of the Lincolnshire Boston was drowned while making an American tour in 1860! He is commemorated in his native town by a memorial which also "features" the paper with which his name was associated.

Boston's prosperity in the past has been dependent upon the wool crop. As the port of a staple town and as a staple town itself it flourished exceedingly about the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries; so much so that when in the reign of Edward I the town was visited by a disastrous fire it is reported that "veins of gold and silver ran mixed in one common current down the streets."

From Boston north-eastward along the Wash shore

the way is marked by a sequence of fine churches, many of them with particularly massive towers.

Wainfleet has been to the fore in recent years through its connection with schemes of varying ambition for the reclamation of the marshy shores of the Wash. This is not the first time it has possessed importance in such a connection, however, for about a century ago a scheme of far greater ambition than modern knowledge of such things would encourage us to support was promoted for the reclamation of the whole of the Wash south and west of an approximately straight line drawn from Wainfleet to Hunstanton. I forget how many thousand acres were to be added to England, but it was a sufficiently large area to suggest being treated as a separate county, and among the other matters for which thoughtful provision was made the name of Victoria County was suggested. In this connection it is interesting to recall Charles I's ambition to build a town in the midst of the Fens, at Manea. He designed the town himself and purposed to call it Charlemont.

Even with modern equipment it is doubtful if such an ambitious project as Victoria County could be carried through on lines that would be even barely economical; far less likely was it to prosper in early Victorian times.

It is rather curious to note how these great reclamation projects receive an impetus from wars. Scottish prisoners, French prisoners and, in our own time, German prisoners have all given (gratis) a hand towards expanding England at the expense of the Wash, and after the Great War great works were promised here under the heading of "employment schemes." Actually a considerable stretch of the shore south-west of

Gibraltar Point, Wainfleet, has been embanked, and it is possible that the experience gained by the Dutch in reclaiming the Zuider Zee will enable a fresh start to be made on "Victoria County." One hopes so, even if only for the opportunity it would give of founding a "garden county." We have "garden cities," and town-planning schemes are discussed almost *ad nauseam*, but what a beautiful thing it would be if the engineers could present us with a brand-new strip of ground some twenty miles each way on which the best brains of the day could be charged to lay out a model county! A real Utopia on the East Coast! Drainage and reclamation are expensive games, however, and such a dream is hardly likely to come true in our time.

And yet, why not? What, for instance, would have been thought of one who predicted, when we were children, that in the year of grace 1927 it would be possible to speak from Skegness to Australia? Yet as we shall see later this is done regularly and as a matter of course. Why, then, despair of our modern Utopia?

And even if the Wash is still a vast amphibious area at all but high tide, it is something to reflect that not so many years ago the whole district was, in the words of Walter White, "little better than a watery morass, often inundated by river floods and the tides of the ocean, and yielding but little produce but geese and wild fowl."

Wild birds are still very much in evidence all along these shores; another visitor not often seen around our coasts is the seal. As many as a thousand seals at a time have been seen disporting themselves on the sands; but the fishermen naturally take a less happy

view of these visitants, and recently there have been great seal-hunts, following the offer of rewards by the Eastern Fisheries Board, some three hundred noses having been paid for in quite a short period.

Well, fishermen have their livings to earn, their families to support, and we ourselves welcome the fish they send to our tables. The same cry went up when the fishermen of Blakeney complained of the depredations of the birds given sanctuary there. Agreed. But one wishes some way could be found of balancing the losses attributed to seals and sea-birds with the tons of fish caught elsewhere and then thrown out as agricultural manure since "it would not pay to carry them to market." As it is, there is a double waste.

WAINFLEET SCHOOL.

The name of Wainfleet has at least once been raised to greatness, for William Patten was a noted figure in ecclesiastical and educational circles in the early fifteenth century. He was Provost of Eton and in 1458 founded Magdalen College, Oxford, eventually becoming Bishop of Winchester. His tomb in that Cathedral is cared for by Magdalen College, and the same authorities also look after the Grammar School he founded in his native town of Wainfleet.

The town was once a thriving seaport, though now it stands well inland. It has access to the sea by means of the Steeping River, here not quite recognizable, it must be admitted, as the "babbling" brook of Tennyson's poem, even though we recognize that

the "brimming river" is the Wash. In its upper reaches, however, the Steeping is a very pretty little stream. We shall see it again on a later page as we visit Tennyson's home at Somersby.

There is, I believe, a popular impression that as a poster-artist Mr. John Hassall was "made" by the famous picture he did for the old Great Northern Railway to advertise the bracing qualities of Skegness. That is as may be, but I am sure that the health-giving reputation of Skegness was not less firmly established by Mr. Hassall's "so-bracing" poster. Skegness had been in existence for many years before the appearance of the amusing and arresting picture, but it had been noted for its sands and swings and coco-nut shies rather than for the superlatively tonic qualities of its air. If they have not already considered doing so, I trust that one day the Fathers of Skegness will consider the propriety of erecting a statue to Mr. Hassall—preferably one of his own design.

Skegness—the Skegness of the posters, the railway excursions and the motor chars-à-bancs, that is—is but the modern descendant of a series of Skegnesses which have occupied this corner of the coast during the last thousand years. There is documentary evidence of its existence in the thirteenth century, and good reason for believing the name was known in these parts as early as the ninth century. Leland, who wrote so long ago as the sixteenth century, was only able to say—"Skegnesse was at sumtyme a great haven towne. Mr. Paynell sayed unto me that he could prove that there was ons an haven and a towne waullid, having also a castelle. The old towne is clean cunsumed and eten up with the se. Part of a chirche of it stode a late. For old Skegness is now buildid a

poor new thing. At low water appere yet manifest tokens of old buyldyngs."

Skegness old church has a low squat tower of considerable area, but the building generally is of small interest compared with the many fine churches in this part of Lincolnshire.

Only a short way out of the town to the north, for instance, is Winthorpe, famed for the excellence of its woodwork. There is a fine screen, and the roof is also good, but best of all are the stall-ends in the chancel, carved with a skill and beauty not often met with since Dowsing and his nineteenth-century disciples (misnamed " restorers ") descended upon the churches of our land. Before leaving the church, do not fail to note the pulley from which the rood-light was suspended over the screen. It is one of those simple intimate touches which help to bring back the colourful past.

There is much of archæological interest in the Skegness neighbourhood. One of the main streets of the town is named Roman Bank and is said to occupy, in fact, the top of part of a huge earthwork erected by the Romans along the north-west shore of the Wash with the intention of keeping the sea at bay.

Inland another place of Roman memories calls us across the flat lands. This is Burgh-in-the-Marsh, built on a slight eminence that is said to be of artificial construction. But the chief interest of the village to-day is its exceedingly fine church, its tower being seen from miles around. The windows are particularly noticeable, and the screenwork is also of considerable interest, notwithstanding the havoc wrought during last century by unintelligent though doubtless well-meant " restoration."

While at Burgh, it is worth while strolling westward

for a mile or so to Bratoft, for the sake of a remarkable memorial of the Armada contained in its church. It takes the form of a painting on wood, a Red Dragon symbolizing the Armada, while four points of land represent respectively England, Ireland, Scotland and France. The inscription runs:

> Spaine's proud Armado with greate strength and power
> Great Britain's state came gapeing to devour.
> This Dragon's guts, like Pharoas scattered hoast,
> Lay splitt and drowned upon the Irish coast;
> For of eight score save too ships sent from Spaine
> But twenty-five scarce sound returned again.
> NON NOBIS DOMINE.

Fascinating little churches lie thick in this part of Lincolnshire, but for the moment we must keep to our plan of following the coast northward. By Orby, then, we can cross the marshes to Ingoldmells, the final syllable of the name suggesting the sand-dunes lining the coast. The church is to be visited on account of a most interesting brass to one "Willm Palmer" who is shown on the brass together with the crutch which earned him the nickname, also recorded on the brass, "wyth ye stylt."

Less than a mile distant is Addlethorpe, with a wonderful wealth of old woodwork—roof, screens and bench-ends. One can hardly approach the church without being struck by the beauty of its south porch: nor can one leave without a lingering further inspection of it, another thought of gratitude to him who is commemorated in an inscription on the east wall:

> The Cryst that suffered
> Greete pangs and hard
> Have mercy on the sowle
> Of Jogn Godard

That thys porche made
And many oder thynges dede
Them for Jesus Cryst
Qwyte hym hys mede.

Sutton and Mablethorpe are by many regarded as twin resorts, and they have this in common that their sandhills and beach form most excellent playgrounds for holiday-makers of all ages, while they are not too far from the Wolds when excursions inland are desired. All along this coast the changes due to erosion have been enormous during past centuries and are still in process. Much of the road we have followed northward from Boston has been built along the embankment thrown up by the Romans for protection against the ravages of the ocean, and at almost any point along the shore we have traced very low tides reveal remains of forests, long submerged. Lincolnshire cannot, fortunately, rival the extraordinary changes which have overtaken neighbouring Holderness, but there is much to interest those who care to study the various effects of tides, winds and river-currents.

Mablethorpe itself is of comparatively recent growth, old Mablethorpe having joined the earlier Skegness and Shipden and Dunwich in the company of submarine towns. After exceptionally heavy storms the long-shore scour may even now reveal the remains of Mablethorpe parish church: they were quite frequently to be seen at such times only a century ago.

The present parish church, a short way inland, is by no means a modern building: in fact in certain lights it has a strangely archaic appearance which is increased by the curious design (or lack of design) of the building itself; for the solid little tower that rises at the west end of the nave is faced at the east

end of the nave by a not very congruous gable of which the ridge is actually higher than the western tower! The whole is somehow reminiscent of the kind of church a child will build with the aid of bricks and a book or two!

Every one at Mablethorpe visits the chancel to see the tomb of one of the heroes of the Tale of the Two Knights. The tale is not very long, nor is it highly involved, and but for the broken helmet over the tomb in Mablethorpe church it is probable that the story would long since have been forgotten. Briefly, two knights, heavily armed, met to fight *à la morte* at Earls Bridge, on the way to Maltby-in-the-Marsh, south-west of Mablethorpe. For some time the two knights fought with no appreciable advantage to either, and then in the same instant each struck a blow that proved fatal to its recipient. *Voilà tout!* One of the knights was buried here in Mablethorpe church; the other was carried to Maltby, and in the church there may be seen a cross-legged effigy said to be that of the other combatant at Earls Bridge. The font at Maltby is a particularly good fourteenth-century effort, the bowl being supported by four angels with outspread wings.

But Mablethorpe has greater memories than those of the warring knights, for here came the Tennyson family on holidays from Somersby rectory.

When, as a youth, Alfred and his brother Charles published that book of *Poems by Two Brothers* for which Messrs. Jackson of Louth paid them ten pounds in cash and ten pounds in books, almost the first incursion into the cash was on account of a jaunt to Mablethorpe. In later years Alfred wrote to his "Dear Old Fitz: Mablethorpe is the place where I am. I

walk about the coast and have it all to myself, sand and sea," and was it not Fitzgerald who remarked "Alfred ought never to have left Lincolnshire"? Certain it is that Mablethorpe and Somersby made an indelible impression on the mind of the young poet, and long after he had moved southward he harks back to:

> The crest of some slow-arching wave
> Heard in dead night along that table shore

—heard from the "lowly cottage" which is still preserved, and from which now, as then, one could see:

> Stretched wide and wild the waste enormous marsh,
> Where from the frequent bridge,
> Like emblems of infinity,
> The trenchèd waters run from sky to sky.

Many another echo of pleasant life at Mablethorpe will occur to those who know their Tennyson; and of those few will leave the neighbourhood without making pilgrimage to Somersby, a dozen miles or more inland as the crow flies, amid

> the woods that belt the gray hillside.

It was at the Rectory here that Alfred Tennyson was born on August 6, 1809, his father being rector of Somersby. His mother was the daughter of a Louth clergyman, and it was to Louth that at first Alfred was sent to school: a period of unhappiness that terminated after four years and was then replaced by tuition from his father, who seems to have been by no means ill-fitted for the task: in fact, the sympathetic years he spent in the Rectory study, constantly poring over books from his father's library, were of

immense importance to the boy, and one wonders what might have happened had the Reverend Tennyson decided to keep his son under the harsh rule of Mr. Waite of Louth.

His father, however, seems to have been convinced of the genius of the lad, who at the age of eight was able to turn out quite creditable blank verse and a couple of years later was composing rhyme couplets after the style of Alexander Pope. When he was only twelve he wrote an epic modelled on the lines of Sir Walter Scott and which consisted of no fewer than six thousand lines, while a drama fell from his pen ere he had properly entered his 'teens! His father, then, had ample reason for stating that should Alfred die "one of our greatest poets will have gone"; although other members of the family were less impressed with the poetic abilities of the lad, for it is related that when his maternal grandfather commissioned a poem commemorative of the newly-deceased maternal grandmother, old Fytche paid the poet half a guinea with the not very encouraging remark, "This is the first money you have earned by poetry, and take my word, it will be the last."

SOMERSBY CHURCH.

Fytche proved a bad prophet. Alfred went to Cambridge, where he made his mark with *Timbuctoo*, where he made the friendship of Arthur Hallam, and whence he returned in haste in 1831 on the death of his father. The family were able to continue to live at the Rectory until 1837. That the Rectory and the district around made a deep impression on the poet is clear from his

frequent references to individual features of the landscape, from :

> The seven elms, the poplars four
> That stand beside my father's door,

to

> The brook that loves
> To purl o'er matted cress and ribbed sand
> Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,
> Drawing into his narrow earthen urn
> In every elbow and turn
> The filter'd tribute of the rough woodland.

Or :

> Pour round mine ears the livelong bleat
> Of the thick-fleeced sheep from wattled folds
> Upon the ridged wolds.

All these are inimitable word-pictures of the region between Somersby and the sea, drawn by a man who knew and loved the country. There is a bust of Tennyson in Somersby church, and monuments of other members of the family, but to many the poet's best memorial in the county that gave him birth is found in his frequent affectionate references to its scenic features.

" The seven elms, the poplars four " no longer guard the Rectory, but in other respects we are assured the scene has not greatly altered since Alfred Tennyson roamed here with book and pencil. His " cold rivulet " still flows down to the sea—we have seen its somewhat unromantic junction with the Wash at Wainfleet—and as we pace alongside it for part of its journey oceanwards we may recall the lines :

> But here will sigh thine alder tree,
> And here thine aspen shiver ;
> And here by thee will hum the bee
> For ever and for ever.

It may be added that the school at Louth in which Tennyson spent several unhappy years no longer exists, having been replaced by a new building in 1853. It is in Tudor style, in appropriate reference to its foundation (or refoundation) by Edward VI. But the glory of Louth is the spire of its church, which rises from a lofty tower to a height of three hundred feet. We have very exact descriptions of the building of this beautiful steeple, the cost having been worked out with almost suspicious accuracy to £305 7*s.* 5*d.*! In 1515 it was finished, and then "William Aylesby, parish priest, with many of his brethren priests there present, hallowed the weathercock and the stone that it stands upon; then the priests sang *Te Deum laudamus* with organs, and the kirkwardens fared ring all the bells, and caused all the people there being to have bread and ale and all the loving of God, Our Lady and All Saints."

Somersby lies at the edge of the Wolds, a district of little sequestered villages and hamlets that one never tires of exploring, that shows new and unexpected beauties at every season of the year, almost every hour of the day. Away across the smooth marshes are Skegness Wireless aerials, and beyond them the smoke of many a ship passing in and out of Wash or Humber: but in among the Wolds are pleasant little places with entrancing names: Salmonby, Burwell—and here and there a curiosity, such as Bag Enderby, or Ashby Puerorum: Ashby "of the boys" of Lincoln Cathedral choir, who are the possessors of some land here.

PETERBOROUGH.

CHAPTER IX

PETERBOROUGH AND THE SOKE

IF Ely Cathedral stands for the beauty of worship, that of Peterborough stands for the strength of faith. Most of the building is pure Norman; it has stood here, almost untouched, since the twelfth century, and there is a sturdy capability about the tremendous piers of the transepts and the manner in which the clerestory and triforium are supported over the nave arches which is most impressive. Here is matter-of-fact, one might say plain building. What frills and furbelows you find at Peterborough are comparatively recent; the older Norman work still holds its own, typical of the fundamental truths of Christianity.

Peterborough Cathedral has this advantage, moreover, that it is set within "precincts" which serve to keep at bay the rush and bustle of the outer world, and the buildings of which hide all but the tops of spires and gables as one looks towards the Cathedral from the Market Place. As we approach the entry to the precincts even these lofty points disappear

from view; and then, in a flash, the wonderful west front confronts us through the gateway.

There is nothing of the Norman reserve about this façade. The three deeply recessed arches soar aloft in a mood of exultation that is taken up by the richly decorated gables and by the delicately pointed spires and pinnacles of the flanking towers. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors." The lines appear beneath a picture of the west front circulated by the Dean and Chapter, and very appropriate is the quotation. The façade was the work of Abbot Acharius in the thirteenth century. The Norman church was finished, and one can picture the worthy abbot, captivated by the grandeur of the design, yet realizing the even greater appeal of the more gracious style then in vogue and finally deciding upon this masterpiece of embellishment as an expression of joy and gratitude that once again it had been possible to erect a beautiful church on the site. At all seasons the work is inspiring; it appears at its best when the noonday sun cuts across and throws into strongest relief the manifold tracery, niches and figures, and fills the three great openings with rich, suggestive, shadow.

Acharius had good cause to rejoice that Peterborough once again possessed a fine church, for two predecessors of the building we now see were utterly destroyed by fire, the first one with all the horrors of a Danish invasion.

It was in the seventh century, we are told, that Peada, a son of the better-known Penda, King of Mercia, founded a monastery here, the spot then being known as Medehamsted "because there is a well there, called Meadswell," comments the *Anglo-*

Saxon Chronicle. The monastery was built of Barnack stone, and some of the blocks were of such size that a yoke of eight oxen could with difficulty draw one along.

> If Barnack quarries had not been so nigh,
> Peterborough Cathedral had not been so high.

Ere the work was finished, however, Peada was slain, being succeeded by his brother Wulfere, who committed the crime of murdering his two sons whom he had found praying before a Christian altar, in defiance of his wishes. Having committed the deed, he repented, and by way of showing his repentance he threw himself with vigour into the task of completing the monastery at Medehamsted. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* tells us how he sent for the abbot and addressed him: "Beloved Saxulf, I have sent after thee for the good of my soul, and I will plainly tell thee for why. My brother Peada and my beloved friend Oswy began a minster, for the love of Christ and St. Peter, but my brother, as Christ willed, is departed from this life. I will therefore intreat thee, beloved friend, that they proceed earnestly on their work, and I will find thee thereto gold and silver, land and possessions, and all that thereto behoveth."

Wulfere was as good as his word, and when the consecration ceremony was over "then stood up the king before all his thanes and said with a loud voice, 'Thanks be to the high almighty God for this worship that is here done; and I will this day glorify Christ and St. Peter, and I will that you all confirm my words. I Wulfere give to-day to St. Peter and the Abbot Saxulf, and the monks of the minster, these lands and these waters, and meres and fens, and

weirs, and all the lands that hereabout lie that are of my kingdom, freely, so that no man can have there any ingress but the abbot and the monks. This is the gift,"—and he proceeded to define the properties. Then, with becoming modesty—"It is little—this gift—but I will that they hold it so royally and freely that there be taken therefrom neither gild nor gable, but for the monks alone. Thus I will free this minster; that it be not subject except to Rome alone; and hither I will that we seek St. Peter, all that to Rome cannot go."

In similarly opulent mood the monastery seems to have spent the ensuing two centuries. Then came the fatal year, 870, and with it a particularly bitter Danish invasion. They came to Medehamsted "burning and breaking, and slaying abbots and monks and all that they there found. They made such havoc that the monastery was reduced to nothing." The fire is said to have continued burning for fifteen days, and so complete was the destruction that when, nearly a century later, Abbot Athelwold visited the spot he found there "nothing but old walls and wild woods." Further investigation of the "old walls," however, disclosed "writings which Abbot Hedda had written: how King Wulfere and his brother Ethelred had wrought it and how they freed it against king and against bishop and against all worldly service."

To his honour, Abbot Athelwold lost no time in rebuilding the monastery; and when it was raised anew Edgar not only confirmed the privileges of the monastery but added considerably to the monastic lands. Among other things he founded the market, stipulating that there should be no other between

Huntingdon and Stamford, and once again Medehamsted embarked on its prosperous way. Athelwold's successor built a wall about the minster; it became thereby a burgh, and henceforth was known as Peterborough. Still it continued to wax. In the eleventh century its splendour earned the minster the new name of Gildenborough.

Then once again the fatal cycle of two hundred years came round. The scenes have been graphically described in *Hereward the Wake*. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* tells us: "Early in the morning came all the outlaws with many ships, resolving to enter the minster; but the monks withstood, so that they could not come in. Then they laid on fire, and burned all the houses of the monks, and all the town except one house. Then came they in through the Bullhithe gate, where the monks met them and besought peace of them. But they regarded nothing. They went into the minster, climbed up to the Holy Rood, took away the diadem from our Lord's head, all of pure gold, and seized the bracket that was underneath his feet, which was of red gold. They climbed up to the steeple, brought down the table that was hid there, which was all of gold and silver, seized two golden shrines and nine of silver and took away fifteen large crucifixes of gold and silver. In short they seized so much of gold and silver and so many treasures, in money, in raiment and in books, as no man could tell another. . . ."

The fabric itself escaped, but not for long, and in 1116 occurred a fire almost as destructive as that lit by the Danes. Legend says this fire was the result of the imprecation of the abbot who, vainly endeavouring to light a small fire by which to warm himself,

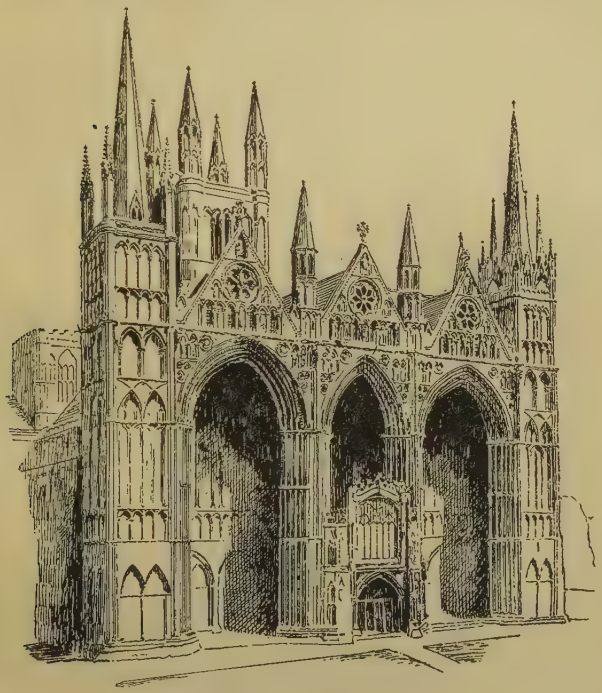
cried in desperation "The Devil kindle thee!" Whether the Devil did, or whether it was some trick of the draught that made his fire burn up suddenly, is not explained; but the fact remains that the first Peterborough, the Golden minster, was burned to the ground. There are a few underground remains of that building still to be seen; and the grave slabs seen through trap-doors in the floor of the north transept also weathered this great calamity.

Out of the flames of the twelfth century arose the present building, and ere the thirteenth century was out, there again stood a great and noble church at Peterborough. Small wonder, then, that Acharius, reviewing the events which had passed since the foundation of the monastery, should feel moved to the exultation expressed in his west front!

Strangers have been known to visit Peterborough and, having gazed upon this Great Doorway, to have departed—satisfied—in the impression that the Cathedral has nothing else worth seeing.

That is the wonder of Peterborough. Having delighted our senses with the exultation of the west front, it proceeds, as we step within, to play another tune. Inside the Cathedral we are among men and things of quiet simple faith; the faith that has endured. Comparison between the naves of Peterborough and Norwich is inevitable, but the palm must be handed to Peterborough on account of the ceiling. It is not such beautiful work as the vaulting of Norwich, but the sober brown lozenges which canopy the nave at Peterborough are more in accord with the general "sense" of the nave. Within the lozenges portraits of persons identified and unidentified supply the necessary spice of brighter colour; but

the painting does not attract the eye from the unbroken range of Norman arches from east to west, in nave, clerestory and triforium. There is equal pleasure in tracing upward any particular bay of the



PETERBOROUGH, WEST FRONT.

nave, to the wider clerestory arch and so to the triple archway springing to the ceiling.

Literally as well as figuratively Peterborough Cathedral is a place of vistas, and there are few more satisfying sights of the kind than the view along the south aisle of the nave. The south wall is decorated

with round-headed arcading that is unbroken by window or monument and the eye is carried across the transept to the south choir aisle, at the end of which the view loses itself in the "new building" at the end. Here is an unrivalled passage of pure Norman. It owes not a little of its charm to the fact that over-zealous reformers swept the church clear of monuments and altars; and it has been suggested that few styles other than the Norman could so well carry off the long vista afforded by the aisles without seeming "bare." Peterborough Cathedral is not "bare." Spacious it is, but the very absence of monuments affords a priceless opportunity of admiring the building as its builders saw it. Would that Westminster Abbey could be half as clean swept of the monuments which crowd it.

The statement that the building is as its original builders saw it needs some qualification, though less than in many cathedrals. Most prominent among the "innovations" in the nave are the east and west arches of the tower. Originally the crossing was crowned by a lantern, but owing to the dangerous condition of the structure it became necessary to pull it down and rebuild. The pointed arches are one of the results of that rebuilding. Those of the transepts, however, are the original Norman work, while the ceilings of the latter have the reputation of being the oldest existing work of their kind. There is something very admirable about the massive work of this part of the fabric; the huge pillars of the north transept, for instance.

In the floor of this arm are wooden trap-doors beneath which are to be seen some Saxon gravestones. Who lies beneath them is not known; it is under-

stood that they lay outside the old Saxon church of which you may still see the foundations in the south transept. These are actual remnants of the building destroyed by the fire which was kindled—so the legend assures us—by the Devil.

The choir stalls occupy the same position as those of Westminster—the easternmost portion of the nave. They are modern, but very good work; the figures over the canopies are those of men conspicuously connected with the development of the Cathedral, from Peter, the patron saint, down to recent times. The choir is separated from the rest of the nave only by a low iron railing, so that standing in the nave one has an unhindered view eastward to the Presbytery, upon which so much care and skill have been lavished during the past century.

As originally completed, the church terminated at the east end in a semicircular apse, and the upper portion of this eastern wall remains, though Decorated tracery has been inserted into the windows. The lowest range of windows has, however, been done away with and the openings now take the form of elaborately decorated arches leading from the sanctuary into the "new building" or retro-choir. In the centre of the sanctuary stands the high altar, beneath a very beautiful canopy supported on marble columns and enriched with splendid mosaic. The floor of the sanctuary is floored with mosaic and marble, and the general effect of the whole eastern end of the old building is extremely rich; and the effect is if possible heightened by the gorgeously coloured ceiling, springing from graceful vaulting and divided into many rectangular compartments. Nor must the contribution of the ironwork enclosing

the sanctuary be overlooked in summing up the general effect.

In this aisle, by the way, are some of the few monuments remaining in the Cathedral, though the most interesting of them is a tablet recalling the removal of a coffin formerly here—that of Mary, Queen of Scots, who died at Fotheringay in 1587. She was buried at Peterborough; but twenty-five years later James I ordered that his mother's remains should be removed to Westminster Abbey, where they now rest in the Chapel of the Seventh Henry.

Peterborough still gives a grave to one queen, however; though the original monument has long been shattered. It was in 1535 that the unhappy Catherine of Aragon was buried here; and here her remains still lie, although the modest monument which at one time marked the spot was long ago destroyed and the unfortunate lady has only in recent times been commemorated by the memorial erected by "the Kates of England." How abruptly, in this quiet corner, we are brought into touch with the tragic days of the Tudors! Catherine's divorce; her daughter Mary's revenge on Cranmer, who after many waverings went bravely to the stake crying "Oh this unworthy hand!"; the equally tragic end of Catherine's successor in Henry's unstable affections—Anne Boleyn, whose spirit we encountered at Blickling; across the church the monument recalling that other Mary, virtually killed by Anne's daughter Elizabeth, who now shares a grave in Westminster with that Mary who was Catherine of Aragon's daughter! What a tragic quartette of women! And yet of the four only Catherine was laid decently in her grave and has been left undisturbed at rest.

But her influence on the history of our land is of less moment to us in Peterborough Cathedral than the fact that here she was buried, for it was on that account, we are told, that Henry decided to spare the building from the general destruction that went on at the Dissolution. Here and now let us acknowledge our debt to Catherine.

A slightly gruesome reference to the circumstance that two queens were buried in the church within a short period is contained in an inscription attached to the picture of "Old Scarlett" on the west wall of the nave. The painting shows a bearded old man, holding the spade of his calling, while at hand are a pick and a skull.

YOV SEE OLD SCARLETTS PICTVRE STAND ON HIE
BVT AT YVOR FEETE THERE DOTH HIS BODY LYE
HIS GRAVESTONE DOTH HIS AGE AND DEATH TYME SHOW
HIS OFFICE BY THESE TOKENS YOV MAY KNOW
SECOND TO NONE FOR STRENGTH AND STVRDYE LIMM
A SCARBABE MIGHTY VOICE WITH VISAGE GRIM
HEE HAD INTERRED TWO QVEENS WITHIN THYS PLACE
AND THIS TOWNS HOVSEHOLDERS IN HIS LIFES SPACE
TWICE OVER. BVT AT LENGTH HYS OWN TVRNE CAME
WHAT HE FOR OTHERS DID FOR HIM THE SAME
WAS DONE. NO DOVBT HIS SOVL DOTH LIVE FOR AYE
IN HEAVEN. THOVGH HERE HIS BODY CLAD IN CLAY.

The sexton's "age and death time" are recorded on a stone in the floor; he lived to the ripe old age of 98 and died in 1594.

Peterborough has no Lady Chapel. At one time such a building stood in the same position as that of Ely: in the angle between the east end and the north transept. But when the Cathedral was presented to the folk of Peterborough for their own use so much repair work was necessary that the Lady

Chapel had to be sacrificed in order that money might be found with which to preserve the main body of the church. In the circumstances we can do no more than regret the sternness of the necessity.

There are many other points in this wonderful place over which one could linger indefinitely. The doorway leading from the Cathedral to the dismantled cloisters should certainly be seen from the outside; and a walk taken round the exterior of the Cathedral if only for the sake of the north walls, which exhibit almost untouched Norman work except where decorated tracery has been inserted into the windows.

From the vicinity of the north transept look backward to the west front. This point commands a very fair view of the bell tower. When the Cathedral is seen from the entrance over by the Market Place, one is apt to be puzzled by the fact that the tower does not fall over the centre of the west front; but the natural assumption that one is not viewing the building squarely should be dismissed, since the tower is actually in the north-west corner of the crossing and not, as often supposed at first blush, over the crossing. It was among the latest Norman works. The very elaborate ornament on the vaulting of the interior is interesting, since it indicates the transition from pure Norman work, as exemplified by the simple hatchet decorations of the tympana in the transepts and elsewhere, to something altogether more advanced and involved.

At the east end can be seen very clearly how the "new work" was built on to the apsidal-ended church. From the parapet of the apse Norman grotesques make faces at you as they made them doubtless at the pilgrims who came here so many

years ago to gaze less at the building than at the shrines containing the relics: credulous folk who nevertheless managed to gain immense satisfaction from contiguity to "a portion of Aaron's rod that budded; a portion of one of the five loaves that fed the five thousand" and the like: tremendous relics, one would think. Yet folk came to Peterborough to be near to something even more potent—nothing less, in fact, than the uncorrupt arm of Oswald of Northumbria. Fully to understand the attraction of this relic we must recall the legend of Oswald, as related by the venerable Bede. "Oswald," he wrote, "was very liberal in giving alms to the poor; and one day while he sat at meat one of his servants told him of a great number of poor people who had come to his gate for help; whereupon he sent them meat from his own table, and there not being enough to serve them all he caused one of his silver dishes to be cut in pieces and to be distributed among the rest. This was observed by Bishop Aydanus, who had come out of Scotland to convert the Northumbrians, and he took the King by the right hand and said 'let this hand never wax old or be corrupted.'" The arm, we are told, remained incorrupt and became of such potency that King Stephen is reported to have paid a visit to Peterborough for the express purpose of seeing the precious relic; moreover "he offered his ring to St. Oswald and remitted to the monastery the sum of forty marks wherein it was indebted to him."

Peterborough is conspicuously bare of shrines to-day, but there is a grandeur about the building that is of greater worth than relics of doubtful authenticity. Solid as the Cathedral appears, however,

there is distressing news concerning the woodwork of the roof. The insidious beetle has been at work for centuries, and some idea of the damage he can do may be gained from the perished timbers exhibited in the nave. The Dean and Chapter appeal for funds to make good such damage as this and to check the spread of the evil, and have instituted a society of "Friends of Peterborough" constituted of all those who have sent subscriptions towards the good work. One can hardly imagine anyone looking upon this grand old building and denying it such friendship.

There is little or no suggestion of a cathedral city about modern Peterborough, though down to the last century it was under the thumb of the ecclesiastics as few other English towns have been, at any rate in modern times. Until it became a corporate borough in 1874, for instance, the town was governed by a High Bailiff appointed by the Dean and Chapter, and supported by constables and other officials also appointed by the dean and chapter at their Court Leet. Moreover, the abbot claimed, from early times, the right to have a prison for felons taken in the Soke and Borough, while the descendants of the Lord Burghley to whom Elizabeth presented the Soke in 1576 (she having purchased it from the then Abbot) had down to last century their own gaol for prisoners arrested in the territorial dependency.

The Soke has gone, so far as the privileges long held by the Abbots and the Dean and Chapter are concerned, but it still exists as a separate district for administrative purposes, having an area of 53,464 acres and a population approaching fifty thousand.

Peterborough itself is an interesting example of the importance of site. It stands at the edge of the

semicircular southern end of the Fen district; and at a time when the Fens *were* Fens, wellnigh impassable except by few and certain tracks, a well-used highway extended round the rim of the "basin"—the shallowest of saucers would be a more fitting analogy, perhaps. Causeways connected the spot with Crowland and other Fenland isles, and if it is going too far to adopt the favourite tag of to-day and say Peterborough was the "Clapham Junction of the Fen District," there is no doubt that the monastery was founded on this site and no other because here was an important traffic centre.

Twelve hundred years after the time of Peada, the genius of man invented the railway locomotive; the countryside became scored with railway lines running in all directions, and owing to certain geographical reasons Peterborough was chosen as an important distributing centre of traffic on what we used to know as the Great Northern Railway. During those twelve hundred years, remarkable as it may seem, the town of Peterborough seems to have advanced not a scrap; when Victoria came to the throne it was still little more than a large village, dependent almost entirely on the Cathedral for the lead in its affairs. Then came the railways, and rapidly there sprang into being an entirely new city. A short stroll through the streets does little to disprove the supposition that a great increase of population, in deference to the needs of railways, is not always to the advantage of urban amenities. Peterborough has its charming corners and pleasant suburbs, but on the whole it is of little attraction outside the Cathedral precincts. Exception must be made in favour of the Market House, of stone, which faces the

Cathedral entry. Built in 1671 and supported on pillars between which the markets are held, this is quite an interesting little building, and behind it is the parish church of St. John. This building originally stood on the other side of the Cathedral Precincts, but in the fourteenth century complaint was made of the difficulty of access during flood-time, and so in the opening years of the fifteenth century the present building was erected. A great part of the materials were derived from the nave of the chapel of St. Thomas à Becket, the chancel of which still stands to the north of the main entry to the Cathedral.

Two other institutions of Peterborough require mention. If a visit is paid to the city in the opening days of either July or October you will not require to be told that a Fair is in progress. Both St. Peter's Fair (dating from 1189) and the Bridge Fair (1439) are far more elaborate than anything of which their founders could have dreamed, but there is fascination in the ingenious machinery which congregates for these meetings and which, incidentally, plays such havoc with other road traffic when it again gets "on the move" at the conclusion of the fair!

Peterborough is an excellent place from which to "take stock" of that wide region known as The Fens. The name is something of a misnomer nowadays, for the whole area is under cultivation and except for the numerous ditches and canals there is little to suggest that the district is more aqueous than others. Of steamy, malodorous swamp there is none, and ague, "The Bailiff of Marshland," has long since been deposed. Cobbett's picture of the Fens

still stands: "The whole country as level as the table on which I am writing. The horizon like the sea in a dead calm; you see the morning sun come up, just as at sea; and see it go down over the rim, in just the same way as at sea in a calm. Everything grows well here; earth without a stone as big as a pin's head; grass as thick as it can grow on the ground; immense bowling greens separated by ditches; and not the sign of a dock or thistle or other weed to be seen."

The name, however, carries the mind back to centuries when the scene was very different. Sluggish streams with countless "feeders" meandered through the flat lands, and with hardly enough "head" on them to carry their waters into the sea overflowed across the amphibious countryside at the least provocation of wind and tide. Fish and wild fowl throve in these conditions, and a few thousand pitiable specimens of humanity snatched a living from snaring the wild things.

The Romans tried their hand at embanking the great horseshoe-shaped basin which lay south-west of the Wash, but with their departure their works seem to have fallen into neglect, and both Hereward the Wake and William the Conqueror had reason to know the intricacies of the Fenland. The only other inhabitants of the Fens were the religious communities at Crowland, Ely, Peterborough, Thorney, Ramsey and Chatteris.

Until the time of James the First no organized attempt seems to have been made to drain the district. In the seventeenth century the renowned Vermuyden was brought across from Holland and a new era was heralded. Channels were cleaned out and embanked,

and a certain amount of progress was undoubtedly made; but these happenings did not at all appeal to the half-wild men and women whom the fish and fowl of the marshes had provided with a scanty living. They argued that once the Fens were drained, fish and fowl would be no more—they, too, would be obliterated. And so these ignorant folk set to work to combat Vermuyden at every step. His workmen were attacked; his embankments were broken down, and something approaching guerilla warfare was waged in the Fens.

Then the Earl of Bedford took a hand, the "Old Bedford River" was cut and suffered to remain, and so was born the Bedford Level. The Bedford Level was followed by the North, Middle and South Levels, the work being aided by Scottish prisoners taken by Cromwell at Dunbar and by Dutchmen captured by Blake from Van Tromp.

A defect of the work hitherto had been a definite and carefully planned system of co-ordination; Rennie was called in and he intercepted the flood-waters of neighbouring counties, straightened river channels, deepened the outfalls and so paved the way for the subsequent developments which have made the once desolate marshland one of the most fertile and productive districts of Britain.

Unfortunately, all these works cost money, and a great proportion of this money has to be raised through rates levied on the land drained. Sometimes these rates fall very heavily, and so it comes about that you will hear many forcible views concerning the conduct of the drainage as you travel through the Fens. Whether the Royal Commission on Drainage will be able to formulate a scheme satisfactory

both to those on the lower levels and those on the higher ground remains to be seen: there is evidence that the Drainage controversy of the twentieth century is almost as heated, not to say bitter, as that of the seventeenth.

It is a far cry from the Royal Commission on Drainage to St. Guthlac who—

could not bear the city's din;

but properly to appreciate Crowland, whose beautiful remains lie a few miles north of Peterborough, it is necessary to bear in mind the conditions among which it was founded. In the sixth century Crowland was just an island of hard dry ground in the middle of the Fens, just such a place as would attract the eye of one who, like St. Guthlac—

CROWLAND.

longed to settle in some hermitage
And longed to have the quiet of the wilds
And miss the haunting fret of human feet.

The story of Crowland's foundation was carved by the monks over the doorway of their Abbey; how—

at last he hired a boatman's boat
And two strong Saxons rowed him up the floods.

Guthlac died in 714.

And after he was buried reverently
And many relics of him found and kept,
The holy brotherhood of anchorites
Took up their dwelling in the sacred isle.
And Ethelbald, the king, hearing of it—
Because his soul had need of many prayers
And deeds of grace, to save it in the end—
Took it in mind to found a monastery.
And, for the ground was marshy, brought new earth
From upland many miles in boats;
And sank huge piles of oak and beech innumerable,
And so built up a church; and made it rich
With decorations and great gifts of lands
By Nene and Welland and the Shepishee.

Ethelbald's building was burnt by the Danes in 870. Two hundred years later its successor was also burnt, the legendary cause being the carelessness of a plumber who on ceasing work for the day left his fire in the tower still a-glow: the wind did the rest. The Crowland which has recently been restored is the building which arose to replace that burnt by the plumber's fire; or rather it is part of that building, for at the Dissolution the Abbey church was turned over to parochial use, and funds or energy were not forthcoming to maintain the fabric, so that except for the tower and the north aisle of the nave Crowland may be regarded as a ruin.

But a very beautiful ruin, particularly the western end, with its splendid arches of Norman and Transitional work and the carvings illustrating the life and work of St. Guthlac. Great buttresses support the leaning nave and tower, and trees cluster thick to ward off the wild winds which sweep across the Fenland in winter: Crowland is indeed venerable.

Inside, one is struck with the beauty of the vaulting, the work of one William of Wermington whose effigy

you may see on a slab in the church. There is a graceful parclose screen retaining traces of the original colouring, and an excellent fifteenth-century font. Recently the glories of Crowland have been made more apparent by the removal of the ugly pews which for so long disfigured the church and by the sinking of the floor to its original level.

The tower is a splendid viewpoint, but it is hardly less famous for its bells. The curfew is still tolled here.

Stranded high and dry in Crowland Market Place is the curious three-legged arch. It is a unique structure, resembling three huge flying buttresses, each about eight feet wide and fifteen feet high, converging at the top and forming a massive tripod. The date of the bridge is given as 1350; it now forms a kind of "look-out" over the little Market Place, rather pathetically "out of water." On the southern face of the bridge is a stone effigy the identity of which has been the cause of no little speculation, as can be gathered from the fact that the net has been cast widely enough to include Ethelbald and Oliver Cromwell.

A very instructive route back to Peterborough is by way of the Deepings, travelling alongside the Welland as far as Peakirk (from Peda, the saintly sister of Guthlac) and so to the Deepings.

> See Deeping Fens
> And the long lawns of Bourn. 'Tis art and toil
> Gives Nature value, multiplies her stores,
> Varies, improves, creates.

Thus Dyer, and the tribute is as well deserved to-day as in his time. Deeping is held to signify

"low meadow," and the name is not inapt; moreover, drainage has actually lowered the level of much of the Fenland. It is said that Deeping Fen sank no less than two feet owing to the pumping-out of the water with which it was formerly soaked; and in several parts you will find buildings standing on piles.

"The long lawns of Bourn" lie away to the north, but in passing it is worth recalling that the place gave birth to Hereward the Wake—and as such figures in Kingsley's story—and also to William Cecil, the first Lord Burghley.

Keep, therefore, a westward course along the northern bound of Peterborough Soke, and so to Barnack, whence came the stone for Crowland and for Peterborough Cathedral and also for Burghley mansion. The latter structure demonstrates that in addition to its utility for religious architectural purposes, Barnack stone in the hands of Tudor masons could be very effectively used in the construction of domestic buildings. Burghley was erected by that Cecil who may be said to have founded the fortunes of his famous family. Here the Lord Treasurer entertained Elizabeth in befitting fashion, and the mansion still breathes an Elizabethan air. The architect was John Thorpe, and the interior decorations were entrusted to such hands as those of Verrio. Nor, being a typically Tudor establishment, were the gardens forgotten, and we find the post of chief gardener filled by that same Gerarde whose literary abilities gave us the curious *Herbal*.

Stamford has much of the quiet charm usually associated with our older University cities, and as a matter of fact had the outcome of a significant move-

ment in the fourteenth century been different, Stamford would have had its university. The movement referred to was the migration from Oxford of a body of students from Brasenose, who carried off the famous old knocker and brought it to the college at Stamford which they named after the Oxford college. The plan was nipped in the bud by the Oxford authorities, and the knocker taken back to Brasenose; but Stamford retains the gateway of its Brasenose College as a reminder of those brave days.

Almost every street in the town has associations of days long past. Of particular interest are the almshouses, known locally as "Callises" in perpetuation of their association with the wool-staplers of Calais. The best of these is known as Browne's Hospital and is certainly to be visited on account of its charming little chapel. When Sir Walter Scott travelled between Edinburgh and London, Stamford was one of the "milestones" he always approached with interest, for he found a particular satisfaction in regarding the tower and broach spire of St. Mary's Church; and although in view of the galaxy of fine churches we have been seeing in other parts of East Anglia St. Mary's is not superlative, its tall tower is certainly a very pleasing sight.

The road south-eastward from Stamford is strangely elevated after our long acquaintance with the flat ways of the Fens; for once as one gazes eastward towards Crowland and Lynn the horizon appears *below* one instead of above. But the road soon falls again to cross the Nene at Wansford, a place that is remembered by many as the scene of a humorous incident in which the leading part was played by Braithwaite, author of the *Journeys of Drunken*

Barnaby. The story goes that as Braithwaite was enjoying a nap on a haycock the waters of the Nene rose suddenly and unexpectedly, carrying off both sleeper and haycock. Braithwaite slept through the journey down river—or so we are asked to believe—and when he awoke he affected to find the surroundings so strange that on being told he was at Wansford he incredulously enquired "What, Wansford in England?" There are various versions of the story, but the truth of any one of them is held to be confirmed by the fact that an inn near Wansford Bridge boasts the sign of "The Haycock."

Where the charmingly diversified country of Rockingham Forest slopes down towards the Nene a few miles above Wansford are the scanty ruins of the once great Castle of Fotheringay, with which the name of Mary Queen of Scots will be for ever linked, for here she was kept a prisoner and here, in the Banqueting Hall, she was executed. We have seen the site of her tomb at Peterborough, and spent a few moments recalling the tragic years through which the queens of our land passed in the sixteenth century. There is little enough at Fotheringay to recall the bitter winter days of 1587–8; and perhaps it is as well, for it was an ill-omened place to which Catherine of Aragon refused to go—although Henry VIII had settled the estate upon her at the divorce—"unless bound with ropes and borne thither." Richard III was born here and Elizabeth stayed here, but through the long list of owners from the twelfth century until the seventeenth, you will hardly find a happy life. Well is it that such a place should lie in ruins.

Eastward from Wansford is Castor, a place of more cheerful interests. Castor, in fact, was the Durobrivæ

of the Romans, and a settlement of considerable importance. What is more, the very considerable remains of Roman days here unearthed have thrown much new light on our knowledge of those times, and in R. G. Collingwood's *Roman Britain* is a paragraph that is of especial interest in these days of trade rivalries. "The imported Samian ware did not die out; it continued to be imported in large quantities, providing incidentally a remarkable instance of a trade in a bulky and brittle commodity which the Romans carried on apparently without any difficulty. But it provoked the British manufacturer to compete and to put on the market a style of pottery which resembled it in having ornament in relief and a highly glazed surface. It was made at and near Castor (Durobrivæ) and the manufacture was carried on very extensively, to judge by the quantities of ware found in almost all Romano-British sites. . . . If we examine a mass of Castor ware and compare it with a mass of decorated Samian, we find that the patterns on Castor are obviously derived from those on Samian."

Many of the treasures unearthed at and near Castor are to be seen in Peterborough Museum.

Roman Castor has to be sought out; Norman Castor proclaims itself far and wide, and very magnificently too, if the tower of its church be the accepted herald. This is an exceedingly rich composition, and for once the prospect of a Norman tower capped by a spire does not jar, so perfect are the proportions of the addition. There is much admirable Norman and Early English work elsewhere in this fine building, to describe which would take too long.

The Camp at Castor stands a little to the south

of the village overlooking Ermine Street, down which motorists hurtle more or less happily towards York and the north. It is a historic thoroughfare, with many an interesting point at which to halt. Normans Cross, for instance, where the Fletton and Peterborough Road turns off, is to be remembered in connection with George Borrow, for here his father, a captain in the Militia, was posted to guard the French prisoners in the huge internment camp. In the Peterborough Museum may be seen those pathetically beautiful models the captured men made from bones, in sheer desperation against the intolerable boredom of confinement.

Peterborough is not seen at its best from this side, for the countryside is peppered o'er with ugly groups of chimney stacks, while the air is at times distinctly malodorous. The reason for this is the thick and valuable deposit of brick earth here found. Fletton must have done more than any other part of our land to solve the post-War housing problem!

Do not, therefore, turn aside from Ermine Street at Normans Cross, but continue down the gentle hill for a mile or more to the picturesque village of Stilton, the village after which the cheese was first named, although it was made in Leicestershire. To-day should you feel inclined to seek a crust and some cheese, there are several inns of very inviting appearance; one in particular, whose name I forget—a charming old building of grey stone and with a very good iron support for its sign.

An eastward turning from the main road about two miles south of Stilton leads towards Ramsey, and the transition from busy Ermine Street to the way across the Fens is sufficiently marked to make the

Thorney Abbey
1802

trip worth while. Stop the car after a mile or so and *listen*. Not a sound of the battalions of motors rushing north and south along the great highway; just the plaintive cries of the birds and the swishing of the grasses alongside the road. All this is reclaimed Fen, and very typical of such country. Mile upon mile of flat and luscious pasture, streaked by hedges and clumps of trees which the wind has bowed in the same direction. Ramsey comes as an oasis in this almost uninhabited "desert," and fittingly so if we have regard to the origin of the name, which was just the ea or island of Rams. It is a rare little place, with but little to show of the great Benedictine establishment which was founded here in the tenth century and which waxed powerful and rich until the dread flood of the Dissolution. What is left is a pretty enough fragment, however, and one entirely conducive to reminiscence.

From Ramsey we look northward across the Fens to Whittlesey with a splendid tower which soars high above the buildings of the little town and beacons the whole district, much as the Stump of Boston sentinels the Wash and eastern Lincolnshire.

Little is left of the great Abbey of Thorney to call us northward again from Whittlesey, but the trip is interesting on account of the view it affords of the immensity of the drainage problem in this district. Here and there the maps show "old courses" of the river Nene, but between Whittlesey and Thorney is the new course of that river, and the water swirls down with a sullen rush that betokens ill should the embankments give way. Even so, after heavy rain or snow the waters often overflow the neighbouring "Wash" and form an immense lake, and the "ea"

or "ey" which terminates so many of the names hereabout becomes more intelligible. Londoners may recall that the original site of Westminster was known as Thornea, and that the earliest ancestor of the Abbey was raised on the then remote "Island of Thorns." The Thorney now before us was similarly cut off from the outer world, and was thus similarly coveted by those wishing to lead calm and cloistered lives far from the madding crowd. But in those days such isolation was a mixed blessing. Such monasteries as those of Ramsey and Thorney, no less than those of Medehamsted and Ely, waxed rich with the gifts of devoted friends, and their wealth became noised abroad. Hence not once but several times we read of marauding, bloodthirsty Danes, sailing up to these isolated communities and butchering all within for the sake of the treasures the monastery contained. Of Thorney as of Ramsey but little is left; but here again there is sufficient to convey a sense of the character of the building, and one is glad to have come.

Ely.

CHAPTER X

ELY

IN no other part of East Anglia is a single step forward so richly rewarded as at Ely. As we travel towards the little city across the Fen the Cathedral is seen from afar, crowning the low hill around which Ely clusters, and the apparently considerable length of the Cathedral fits in with the general flatness of the landscape—widespreading pasture lands intersected by hedges and hidden dykes and studded with clumps of wind-bent trees. The sense of breadth is not altogether missing when we are confronted with the incomplete west front of the Cathedral, since the mind's eye adds the lost north-west transept and tower. And Alan of Walsingham's famous lantern may be thought too squat to bear its proper share in the silhouette of the building from either north or south. But on passing through the beautiful galilee porch at the west end, and taking the step forward to which I have alluded, at once breadth gives place to loftiness. Before us stretches the incomparable nave, terminated at the east end

by a glorious slender arch whose true proportions can only be grasped when a human figure passes near its base. This sense of loftiness is increased by the semicircular pillars of the nave, which rise unbroken from floor to ceiling, less like the usual "forest of stone" than a succession of slender lances. Alan of Walsingham was undoubtedly a great architect, but this superb nave impresses one at least equally with his lantern and the Lady Chapel.

When I was last there it was towards evening of a wild autumn day, and the effect of the coloured windows in the nave aisles, in conjunction with the clear glass in the clerestory and triforium, was to tinge the stonework of the walls until they seemed to rise like a great piece of parchment, age-darkened along the lower edge but whiter towards the top. And to continue the simile, there, far above me, hung the glorious painted roof, its colours bright yet delicate as in some old illuminated manuscript.

All this is seen in taking that one step forward through the west door. Surely few other spots can afford so rich a transition!

Much more that is stirring greets you as you stand beneath this western tower. On the right the Norman zigzag ripples over archways and the round arch itself is repeated many times in the arcade adorning the walls of the south-west tower. The north-west tower, as we have seen, tumbled down long ago—one may picture the grotesques which project from the external fragment as looking fearfully to the ground as though anticipating that their turn to fall was imminent. Fortunately they appear to have but little reason for such fears; but the remaining tower bears evident signs of age. Some of the decoration

on the outer face is rather unusual, and the tower is as well worth studying as any part of the exterior of the Cathedral.

Having experienced something of the wonderful beauty of Ely—but only something: much more is to come—one asks how it came about that a cathedral of such size and splendour was reared in such a situation. Ely is a "city" by virtue of the cathedral alone; many a place no more extensive than Ely, answers cheerfully to the name of village. Moreover Ely is not the focus, as it were, of a district at all thickly populated. As a matter of fact the site appears to have been selected on account of this very remoteness.

In the days when the Isle of Ely *was* an island—*vide*, for instance, *Hereward the Wake*—it was given by Tondberg, Prince of the South Fen-men, to his wife Etheldreda, daughter of King Anna of East Anglia. On the death of Tondberg very soon after the marriage, it was to Ely that his widow repaired, and from Ely that she was haled, against her will, to wed Egfrith, son of Oswy of Northumbria. The lady had, however, taken vows of virginity, and ere Egfrith succeeded to his father's throne Wilfrid of York had stepped in and Etheldreda found herself free. It was to Ely she returned, staying a short while at Coldingham, where was a religious establishment accommodating both monks and nuns. At Ely Etheldreda proceeded to found a similar institution, and to rule it with distinction. Then, in 695, she died of the plague. Some years later the then prioress—who was, incidentally, Etheldreda's sister—decided to move the body of the first prioress from the common cemetery into the church, and then it

was that Etheldreda's reputation for sanctity was established beyond dispute, for her body was found to be still uncorrupt as it lay in its wooden coffin.

So, too, with the fame of Ely itself, which at once became the goal of countless pilgrimages, the depository of numberless costly gifts. When, in consequence of the treachery of Lodbrog, the Danes made a raid of more than ordinary intensity, the marble cist (said to have been brought from Roman Grantchester) containing the saint's grave was carefully hidden; and when the Normans built the Cathedral at Ely of which the present nave is a relic one of the first ceremonies was the solemn translation of the remains of Etheldreda. Hither, too, were brought the remains of Withburga which had come to Ely from Dereham, as we shall see on a later page, in more questionable manner than seems fitting to modern minds.

Both Etheldreda and Withburga were possessed of miracle-working sanctity, and if it is only the site of their graves we are shown to-day, there is more than a touch of womanly beauty in the graceful lines of the Cathedral nave.

Appropriately, too, the oldest monument in the church is to one of Etheldreda's servants. It is in the south aisle of the nave, and consists merely of the base and part of the shaft of a seventh-century cross inscribed:

LVCEM TVAM OVINO
DA DEVS ET REQVIE (M)
AMEN

which has been translated "Thy light to Ovin grant, O God, and rest, Amen"; Ovin having been Etheldreda's right-hand man. The fragment was found at Haddenham and very appropriately brought to Ely.

Properly to appreciate the roof paintings in the nave field-glasses are required. The work is quite modern; having been begun about the middle of last century by one of the Hunstanton Le Stranges and completed, after his death, by Gambier Parry. From west to east the subjects are as follows:

The Creation
The Fall
The Sacrifice of Noah
The Sacrifice of Isaac
Jacob's Ladder
The Marriage of Ruth
Jesse
David
The Annunciation
The Nativity
The Wise Men and the shepherds adoring
The Lord in Glory

Keeping step, as it were, with these scenes there are on either hand a series of Biblical portraits, from Abraham and Jacob to Matthew and Luke.

But the most effective piece of colouring in the Cathedral is the interior of the lantern. Whatever one may think of its external appearance, the unique beauty of its effect on the interior of the Cathedral cannot be gainsaid. Unlike some other lanterns (so called) this does fulfil the function of illumination. And in more than one sense, since contemplation of its proportions reveals the genius of Alan of Walsingham.

The tale has often been told how Alan was engaged on the building of a Lady Chapel when disaster visited the main Cathedral building; its central tower crashed down and work on the Lady Chapel

was abruptly suspended while the gifted sacristan undertook the replacement of the fallen tower. The Octagon and the Presbytery are the result.

In these days of steel girders and imitation stone veneers the problem so happily solved by this old-time priest-architect seems hardly a problem at all; but in the fourteenth century men had but little experience or equipment for bridging such a wide space as here appeared.

West Porch, Ely.

Prior to the crash of the tower the space at the crossing was more restricted, and further light on Alan's genius is afforded by the daring manner in which he deliberately robbed nave, choir and transepts each of a bay, leaving at the crossing a noble space from which the proportions of "the only Gothic dome" can be properly appreciated. Smaller arches connect the four great ones of the crossing, and between them rise the shafts supporting the splendid vaulting carrying the lower part of the lantern. To the top of this vaulting all is of stone; the upper portion is of wood, and some measure of the relative difficulty of the work can be gained from the statement that whereas the stonework was completed in six years, the erection of the woodwork alone occupied eight years. England was scoured for suitable timber; it is probable, for instance, that

Bedfordshire supplied the great 60-ft. oak corner posts of the Lantern.

When construction was complete the interior of the lantern was coloured, but of the designs we have no knowledge. Fortunately fresh colour was applied last century and the effect as the eye is led upward by the gilded vaulting and the painted panels to the blue canopy, in the centre of which the relief of the Lord in Glory stands prominently forth, is extremely inspiring.

Around the Octagon and in the lantern quite an appreciable amount of Ely history is recorded. For instance, the corbels, which rest, as it were, upon the tall vaulting shafts, between the arches of the Octagon, picture in outline the career of St. Etheldreda. Her second marriage (to Egfrith of Northumbria) is depicted on the corbel at the south-west corner of the north transept. On the corresponding pier of the same arch we see her taking the veil at Coldingham, and following the corbels round we see successively her staff miraculously growing into a shelter for her; her preservation by a flood while pursued by Egfrith: her installation as abbess of Ely; her death and burial; a prisoner set free by her merits; her translation.

Over each of the smaller arches are series of canopied busts of the apostles; but the windows above trace the story of Ely, although the south-west group is sufficiently catholic to include, in addition to Edward III, Queen Victoria and Queen Philippa, Prior Crawden and the Prince Consort!

Most interesting of the portraits around the Octagon are two on the north-west face, the heads terminating the hood moulds of the arch represent-

ing Alan of Walsingham and (probably) his master mason.

Good Norman work crops out again in the transepts, and in the southern one an attempt has been made to suggest the original colouring of the Cathedral. Here, by the way, is a memorial of Dean Merivale, the Roman scholar. Another scholar is commemorated by the first monument encountered in passing along the south choir aisle: Johannes Moore, who is bewailed by remarkably well-nourished angels, one of whom positively bleats in grief!

The choir screen, one of Sir Gilbert Scott's creations, is very fine, but what can one say of Wyatt, who caused the demolition of a unique Norman screen which crossed the nave? Read this extract from the excellent little History of the Cathedral circulated by the Dean and Chapter: "This screen filled the whole bay" (i.e. the easternmost bay of the nave). "It was not solid but was like a roofed passage. The monks, entering the Cathedral by the south door from the cloister, passed through the passage and so entered the choir. There were two doors in the screen's western face, through which the Sunday procession left the choir and returned after perambulating cloister and nave."

There are many Gilbert Scott screens; let our own thoughts upon the destruction of this unique "roofed passage" be sufficient warning to those who even in our own days are allowed to do incalculable damage in the baneful name of "restoration."

The east end of the church is well worth visiting on account of the exquisite pair of chapels which fill the south-east and north-east corners. In passing along the south choir aisle the tomb of Bishop Gunning

will be seen. This was the prelate who in the seventeenth century composed the beautiful prayer "for all sorts and conditions of men."

The chapel at the south-east corner of the church was erected to contain the tomb of Bishop West, who died in 1533. It is an amazing piece of work. Hardly a square foot of wall or ceiling but has been chiselled into corbel, or canopy, or some other form of intricate decoration. The work is not merely abundant; it is good and interesting as showing Italian influence upon the Perpendicular style.

The chapel at the north-east corner, erected by Bishop Alcock (1500), is no less intricately carved, but the general effect is not so pleasing on account of the rather unattractive clunchstone, which in appearance has some resemblance to pumice. This is a pity, for the profusion of crocketed canopies in the south-west corner is truly remarkable. The graceful ceiling is a pregnant commentary on this somewhat reckless scattering of intricate ornament.

Two monuments on the north side of the choir demand scrutiny. The first is that of Hugh de Northwold, who was bishop between 1229 and 1254. He is represented in effigy, robed and with crozier. The other monument is the shrine that formerly surmounted the tomb of Bishop Hotham, which is on the south side of the choir. The particular interest of this shrine rests in the superstition that it originally formed part of the shrine of Etheldreda, having been adapted by Alan of Walsingham. Be that as it may, the magnificent set of stalls include those made when Alan reconstructed the choir, at the same time that the Octagon was built. The miserere carvings represent religious subjects, but monkish humour creeps

out here and there, and an hour or so spent examining these pictures will bring increased appreciation of the "humanity" of these mediæval craftsmen.

Ely Cathedral is well lit as Cathedrals go, but by comparison its Lady Chapel is almost dazzlingly light. This is accounted for by the fact that there is no coloured glass in the windows, while these are of considerable size—in fact, the upper half of the walls seems to consist principally of glass. Yet between these windows space is found for columns to support the graceful vaulting which upholds the exceptionally wide ceiling. Formerly this flood of clear light would have been of greater value than at present, for the lower portions of the walls are graced with richly canopied niches and tabernacle work—work that is still extremely beautiful, though sadly mutilated by zealous puritans of the past. The Lady Chapel now forms the Parish Church. Its position, to the north of the Cathedral, is certain to provoke interrogation. The reason was simply that further eastward extension of the main building was prevented by a roadway. In addition to the Cathedral itself there are the precincts, the huge old Gateway, and the time-stained Bishop's Palace, to be seen.

West Tower, Ely.

Beyond the Bishop's Palace is the Church of St. Mary, well worth a visit for the varied architectural

styles there represented. Beyond the church again, and facing the road by which you enter Ely from Cambridge, is the timbered vicarage in which Oliver Cromwell once resided. The little green in front of the house is of even greater interest, for here he "licked into shape" the handful of men out of which grew the redoubtable Ironsides. To-day it is a peaceful spot, as indeed is the whole Isle of Ely, but probably few parts of East Anglia can hark back to more dreadful scenes. Its former insularity was by no means an unmixed blessing, and the Danes had an unpleasant habit of sailing up from Lynn intent upon plunder and slaughter. But the Conqueror found it a hard nut to crack when he came down to try and subjugate Hereward the Wake and his anti-Norman adherents who had found sanctuary in the Isle.

Kingsley's archæology may be disputed; but for a graphic description of the island, and particularly its south-west corner by Aldreth, the appropriate chapters of *Hereward the Wake* would be hard to beat. It was for no light reason that here William completed with immense difficulty the task he had begun with comparative ease at Hastings; in fact, it is interesting to speculate what might have happened had not the Abbot decided to seek out the Conqueror and make peace with him.

Now the invaders come easily enough by motor or train, and in due season the Fens are invaded too by huge numbers of wild ducks, widgeon, teal, snipe; and very weird a company of widgeon may sound as they fly whistling overhead.

Incidents in *Hereward the Wake* do not complete the list of Ely's contributions to literature. The word

tawdry, strange as it may seem, is said to have arisen from the practice of pedlars who crowded the city on the occasion of the fair of St. Etheldreda, or St. Audrey. The goods they sold were of such a worthless kind that they became notorious, and linked with this particular fair to such an extent that similarly shoddy articles sold elsewhere were likened to the "St. Audrey" gewgaws, and the name stuck, being merely abbreviated into the form we know—tawdry.

One of the discoveries Mr. H. V. Morton made when "in search of England" was that the word "billycock" can also be traced to Ely. The origin of the word, he writes, was in the head-coverings which the Pope as a special favour allowed the monks to wear as a protection against the lashing winds of winter. These head-coverings were known as "wilkoks." It is to be hoped that they were more dignified in appearance than their modern descendants!

The limitations of space will not allow any further exploration of the Isle of Ely, nor of the Ouse Valley towards Downham. Neither may we bring within the compass of this volume the great centre of East Anglian university life. But Cambridge has been briefly described in another volume of this series, and the next chapter will take us into the heart of Norfolk and a countryside less known to the tourist in search of the picturesque than any other region of the homeland.

The Old Way, Thetford.

CHAPTER XI

SOUTH-WEST NORFOLK

ON London Bridge one fine morning some four or five centuries ago there might have been seen one who was apparently a stranger to London; one, moreover, who was clearly seeking something, he knew not what. And presently, if curiosity persisted, he might have been seen to stop and speak with another man who bore a similar questing look in his eyes; but then curiosity would almost certainly have lapsed, for after a few words had been exchanged these two fellows became very much like other men tramping London Bridge: they had become possessed of a purpose, and the first man, at any rate, began walking quickly northward, away from the Bridge.

He had a long journey before him—all the way to Swaffham in Norfolk, in fact; but we may take it his steps did not flag, for the man he had met (as directed in a dream) on London Bridge had imparted an excellent piece of news (which he also had acquired through a dream) and which called for verification at the earliest moment. In short, the man now making his way to Norfolk as fast as legs would carry him

had been told that under his own pear tree in his own orchard at Swaffham were buried pots of gold.

Need it be added that the information was found to be correct ? If you doubt the story go to Swaffham to-day, where they will tell you how, out of his excavated hoard, the fortunate owner of the pear tree gave enough money to build the north aisle of the parish church. In commemoration of that gift and in accordance with the old custom there were sprinkled among the decorations of the church several carvings of a travelling tinker, with his dog and wife ; but whether the man was really a tinker or whether the ornamentation was a punning allusion to his name Chapman, is a question you must settle for yourself. It would certainly seem strange for a tinker to own an orchard, even in the good days of old.

Swaffham has little else of interest beyond the church, which is a sufficiently fine building, though the tower has been spoiled by the addition of a curious affair reminiscent of wedding-cake decoration. Here, nevertheless, is one of those churches which impel one to dig and probe for the remains of that vital spark which was not content to have just an ordinary church, to seek the identity of the man with the mind which saw above the average. And at Swaffham one is inclined to wonder at the imagination and the loving care put into such a work as the church roof, with its winged angels—and to ask also, whether we shall ever again see such craftsmanship except in the great cathedrals.

There are two excursions from Swaffham ; one can be performed in spirit, but that to Castle Acre should undoubtedly be made in person. The former is

Castle-Acre Priory

1800

south-eastward for about ten miles to Watton and Griston, noted as being the veritable home of the Wicked Uncles whose niece and nephew have come down to fame as The Babes in the Wood. It may surprise the reader to learn that either Uncles or Babes ever existed beyond the purlieus of Drury Lane and Pantomime land ; but there is documentary evidence (of a sort), while the wayfarer of an evening in late autumn in the neighbourhood of Wayland Wood will have no difficulty in accepting the theory that Wayland is derived from wailing, and that the wailing is not (as might be supposed) that of the wind but that of the ghosts of the " Babes."

Castle Acre is hardly less ghost-ridden, but with ghosts of a different kind. The place lies perhaps six miles northward from Swaffham, and the ghosts begin to peer at one directly the village is entered. At first, if one is in fanciful mood, the effect may be rather eerie ; then as one gathers courage and stops to inspect one of the spooks it is seen that almost every house front contains chunks of stone obviously quarried from a religious building of some quality, while here and there are the stone portraits of the men concerned with the building or the maintenance of the Priory founded here in the eleventh century. The intention of the founders—William and Gundrada de Warenne—was to repay the hospitality they had received at Clugny, when on pilgrimage to Rome, by establishing Cluniac priories here and at Lewes, Sussex. It was a very beautiful range of buildings and despite the raids of local builders the remains are well worth seeing. Some of the decoration is in astonishingly good condition. The ruins will be found within ten minutes' walk of the village.

Castle Acre takes its name from the huge earthwork enclosure in which stand the remains of a mediæval castle. The learned will know where to turn for technical descriptions of these earthworks, but here it will suffice to say that excavations have shown the site to have been occupied in pre-Roman times, that the Romans made use of it for some four centuries, and that a Saxon fortress preceded the Norman keep of which the remains are still to be seen.

Small wonder that "ghosts" walk in the village!

Striking north-westward from Castle Acre is the best-preserved section of that mysterious thoroughfare known as Peddar's Way, and if ever a way was thronged with ghosts it is this silent, straight, purposeful track as it strides from height to height until at last it descends to the sea at Holme.

East Dereham.

A dozen miles in an easterly direction from Swaffham and we arrive at East Dereham, which has literary associations ranking in interest with those of the Woodbridge district. To Dereham came Cowper in the latter years of his life, and here he died in April, 1800. It is a very pathetic figure that Borrow draws of "the deathlike face no longer occasionally seen timidly and mournfully looking for a moment upon thy market place, quiet and pretty D. . . .; the hind in thy neighbourhood no longer at evening-fall views, and starts as he views, the dark lathy figure moving beneath the hazel and alders of shadowy lanes or by

the side of murmuring trout streams; and no longer at early dawn does the sexton of the church reverently doff his hat as, supported by some kind friend, the death-stricken creature totters along the church path to that mouldering edifice with the low roof."

A melancholy picture, and if you will also make your way to the church you will wish that the composers of the inscription on the wall of the north transept had at any rate omitted the hateful "Esq." —which looks the more incongruous for the niggardly abbreviation:

In Memory
Of William Cowper Esq.
Born in Hertfordshire, 1732
Buried in this church, 1800.

The house in the Market Place from which the rapidly wasting poet was "occasionally seen timidly and mournfully looking" has long since been replaced by a nonconformist chapel.

Dereham is reposeful enough to-day, but there was a time when it buzzed to an extent hardly equalled even by a modern market day, for the church was the repository of the remains of a saint who worked miracles for the faithful.

She was Withburga, daughter of an East Anglian King of the seventh century and sister to the saintly Etheldreda of Ely. All her life Withburga had lived among remarkable happenings, and when she founded a nunnery at Dereham two deer made a habit of trotting up every morning with a supply of milk for the Abbess and her ladies. In due course an ignorant local fellow shot an arrow through each of the deer—and equally in due course he was fatally stricken with disease.

When Withburga died in 654 she was interred in the burial-ground attached to the nunnery. As Abbess she had been generally beloved, and a few years after her death it was decided to remove her remains from the nunnery burial-ground into the church. Then it was that her true sanctity began to appear, for when the grave was opened her body was found to be incorrupt. It was removed and suitably interred in the church, and ere long acquired a considerable reputation for the working of miracles. Pilgrims came from all parts and the nunnery waxed rich with their offerings. Now such offerings were an important part of the income of a religious establishment in those days, and in due course the Abbot of Ely cast covetous eyes on Withburga's shrine at Dereham. For some while he did little more than covet; then his greed increased to such a pitch that one night a party of his monks came to Dereham, broke open the shrine of Withburga and carried her still incorrupt body off to Ely.

He might have saved himself the trouble, for not thus easily are miraculous faculties disposed of. The monks took back to Ely the still incorrupt remains of the saint, it is true, but her miracle-working powers were transferred to the well still to be seen near the east end of the churchyard.

And now let us walk a mile or so southward from Dereham to visit Dumpling Green and the birthplace of George Borrow, whom we have met at various stages of his career, at Oulton, Norwich, and elsewhere. "On an evening in July, in the year 18—, at East Dereham, a beautiful little town in a certain district of East Anglia, I first saw the light," he wrote in the autobiographical *Lavengro*; but there is

little or no doubt that the actual place of his birth was at Dumpling Green, in a farmhouse which at that time was in the occupation of Samuel Prefrement, the father of the girl who had married Thomas Borrow, father of George. Borrow senior was a soldier, and a curious link with one of his duties—the conveyance of French prisoners from the coast to Normans Cross, near Peterborough—is to be found in the churchyard of Dereham, where a gravestone records the shooting of a prisoner who had escaped from the detached bell tower, at that time used as a lock-up for prisoners en route from the coast.

The exigencies of a military life made it necessary for the Borrows frequently to change their quarters, but Dereham always had a soft corner in the heart of George Borrow, as his oft-quoted tribute proves: "I live to think on the pretty, quiet D. . . ., thou pattern of an English country town, with thy clean but narrow streets branching out from thy modest market place, with thine old-fashioned houses, with here and there a roof of venerable thatch, with thy one half-aristocratic mansion, where resided thy Lady Bountiful—she, the generous and kind, who loved to visit the sick, leaning on her gold-headed cane, whilst the sleek old footman walked at a respectful distance behind. Pretty, quiet D. . . , with thy venerable church, in which moulder the remains of England's sweetest and most pious bard."

A curious set of influences were at work on Borrow during his early years at Dereham. Of his devotion to Cowper there is no need to speak. Then there was the influence of Lady Fenn, whose husband had but recently given to the world the inimitable Paston Letters. "Mr. Fenn of East Dereham," said Walpole,

is "a smatterer in antiquity, but a very good sort of man," and his literary enthusiasms overflowed to his wife, who published a number of children's books over the signature of "Mrs. Teachwell" and "Mrs. Lovechild"—ominous pseudonyms which seem to indicate that little enough of the delightful manner of the Paston Letters had come to her from her husband. This is the Lady Bountiful who resided in the "half-aristocratic mansion" alluded to in the quotation above, and there is no doubt that her by no means inconsiderable success as an authoress further stimulated Borrow to literature.

Greatest influence of all, however, was that of the indefatigable journalist Daniel Defoe. Almost by accident Borrow received a copy of a book by Defoe, which he forthwith devoured with eagerness. "It was in this manner," he wrote in after-years, "that I first took to the paths of knowledge"; and he might have added that at that moment his mind was made up: he would travel and he would write. "Hail to thee, spirit of Defoe! What does my own poor self owe to thee?"

Dereham is renowned in literary circles chiefly on account of the birth of Borrow at Dumpling Green. But surely few places of its size can offer intimate associations with four such varied literary souls as the editor of the Paston Letters, the authoress of *A Child's Grammar* and *Cobwebs to Catch Flies*, the author of the Olney Hymns, and the indefatigable author of *The Bible in Spain*!

Those who are interested in the early ecclesiastical history of East Anglia will probably like to run northward for ten miles from Dereham to see what is to be seen at Elmham. It is a humble enough place

to-day, but in the seventh century it was of some importance. It will be remembered that the see of East Anglia, which Felix fixed at Dunwich, was in 673 divided into two, and the seat of one was at Elmham. But in 1070 it was decided that episcopal sees should not be centred in villages, and the Bishop therefore departed from Elmham to Thetford, whence a few years later he again moved, this time to Norwich. Elmham appears to have slumbered undisturbed since the episcopal retinue departed.

Travelling by railway there is but little difficulty in reaching Wymondham from Dereham; but driving or cycling there is an adventurous journey before the explorer, since much of the way lies along pleasant lanes that invite to lingering and which turn now this way and now that in a seeming endeavour to show off every aspect of this part of the pleasant county of Norfolk. Some five miles short of the destination will be passed the magnificent estate and mansion of Kimberley, long the home of the Wodehouse family, and with treasures including a sword used by a Wodehouse at Agincourt. Wymondham is pronounced Windham. The "lion" of the town is the church, which rejoices in the possession of two towers, one at each end. Notwithstanding the picturesqueness of these towers, the duplication was not the result of *jeu d'esprit* on the part of the architects and builders, but came about in this way. Originally there stood on the site a Benedictine priory which had a church consisting of

WYMONDHAM.

nave and aisles, transepts and choir. This building had a tower at the crossing and two other towers at the western end; these last named were rebuilt in the form of a single tower during the fifteenth century. At the time of the Dissolution the eastern part of the church was used for monastic services, the nave, as was customary, being used by the people. After the Dissolution of the Priory the eastern end of the church was destroyed, but the tower at the crossing was suffered to remain, and what had been the nave became the parish church. So it came about that Wymondham church has the curious distinction of two towers, one at each end. The building is not merely curious on this account, however. Like almost every church in East Anglia it has beautiful features and is well worth examination. Its Norman interior has been placed second only to Norwich among Norfolk churches. The church is the burial place of several Earls of Arundel, including that William d'Albini who became first Earl of Arundel. (See under Castle Rising.)

Wymondham itself is a delightful place, and those with a train to catch should be well on their guard against the allurements of sauntering in and about its quaint byways. The gem of the place is the Market Cross, built in 1616 but restored during last century. Notwithstanding its eccentricity it is undeniably picturesque.

In the sixteenth century Wymondham was the home of the brothers Kett, whose well-meaning support of the rising which became known as "Kett's Rebellion" caused one to be hanged at Norwich. His brother, William Kett, was hanged from the tower of Wymondham Church.

Not only the Ketts would have been happier had the rebellion not occurred; among the soldiers ordered to East Anglia in connection with the rising was the Duke of Leicester, who was accompanied by his son Robert, and in later years the beautiful daughter of Sir John Robsart, who lived at Stanfield Hall, between Norwich and Wymondham, must often have looked back with longing upon the happy days before the rebellion which brought her face to face with the man who was to cause her so much suffering.

HINGHAM CHURCH.

In our pilgrimage through East Anglia we have encountered an extraordinary number of men and women who have worked nobly and successfully for the betterment of their fellow-creatures: men and women, moreover, who were pioneers. The Quakers, the Pilgrim Fathers, Clarkson, the anti-slavery champion; Elizabeth Fry, prison reformer, and many another. Nor is the list exhausted with the Ketts, who were at least deserving of success in their stand against Enclosures and other handicaps placed upon the struggling small farmer; in fact, it is four miles west of Wymondham, at Hingham, that we encounter the brightest name of them all—Lincoln. Not that Abraham was ever at Hingham, but it is from that village that the lineage of the Lincoln family is generally traced, the Robert Lincoln who died in 1540 being generally regarded as Abraham Lincoln's ancestor. So that Norwich has ample solace near at

hand if ever it regrets that the Abraham Lincolne who lies in St. Andrew's Church cannot be linked at all definitely with his namesake who was one of the greatest of Americans, and of whom a bust stands in Hingham church.

Hingham produced another sturdy independent in Robert Peck, who in the seventeenth century was rector. He was not at all amenable to the rule of the Bishop of Norwich (who, by the way, was uncle to Christopher Wren) and so migrated to America. Here he founded another Hingham, and just before the Great War the two Hinghams renewed associations by the erection of a memorial in the Massachusetts town into the base of which was built a stone sent from Hingham, Norfolk, and inscribed:

The Hingham Stone
long used as a mounting block
is believed to have stood
for centuries on the village green
and to have been known to the Forefathers before the migration.
It was given by Hingham, Norfolk,
to Hingham, Massachusetts,
for this memorial
and was presented to the town
on October 9, 1911, by the
Right Hon. James Bryce, D.C.L.
Ambassador for Great Britain
to the United States.

Such stones and memorials, one thinks, must often ease the thorny path of Britain's ambassadors to the great Republic.

Before leaving Hingham a moment or two should be spared for the tomb on the north side of the chancel of the parish church where lie the remains of Thomas, Lord Morley, Marshal of Ireland. For a century or

two this ancient and honourable office was connected with Hingham families: a hint of its character may be gleaned from the information that Henry V agreed that to Lord Morley should belong all prisoners taken "except kings, princes and king's sons."

The pioneering spirit persists, even as we make our way back to Wymondham, for the fine estate of Kimberly reminds us that the estate formerly belonged to the Wodehouses, one of whom was created Earl of Kimberley and whose name is perpetuated in the South African mining town.

A place of ancient and honourable lineage is Thetford. When he set out to trace the course of the Icknield Way, Edward Thomas found it "a most pleasant ancient town, built of flints, full of turns and corners and yards. It smelt of lime tree and brewing." I dare not hope to improve on that thumbnail impression.

Travelling down to Thetford it will be clear that inevitably a town must have sprung up here in primitive times, for here the Icknield Way crossed the confluent Thet and Little Ouse rivers and so gave the place considerable strategic value. And if, leaving the London road on the outskirts of the town, a way is threaded along byroads on the right, we come to one thoroughfare known as Castle Lane which was not only part of the ancient Icknield Way but which takes its name from a fortification almost as old as the Way itself.

Thetford Castle is no battlemented stronghold, nor has it such picturesque accompaniments as portcullis, machicolations or even dungeons. It is, in fact, merely a chalk mound, supported by some grass-grown ramparts. But it would be difficult to name any

mound of the kind more striking. Silbury, alongside the Bath Road, is possibly bigger, but Thetford appeals more to the imagination. Over eighty feet in height (vertical measurement) and just on a thousand feet in circumference, its age is unknown. The Romans found and utilized it, and it was in constant service during the long and hectic period of the Heptarchy. To-day its wildest echoes are awakened by the laughter of children at play, but a thousand years and more ago it knew sounds very different. Time and again did the Danes attack Thetford and put its occupants to the sword and fire; and if you take your *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* or *Hereward the Wake* up into the little cup-like depression in the top of the mound you will read those pages with the rarest interest. The elm trees which at present spread a leafy canopy over the bowl are of quite recent date, having been planted during the last century.

Since in early days affairs religious bore so close a relation to affairs political, it goes without saying that the neighbourhood soon attracted important religious settlements, and so it came about that when the See of East Anglia (which Felix had seated at Dunwich) was divided, the bishopric which was seated at Elmham was soon removed to Thetford, an order having gone forth that villages were insufficiently important to support the headquarters of sees. In due course Thetford had to yield place to Norwich in the matter, but its religious traditions were upheld by the great Cluniac Priory of St. Mary's which Roger Bigod founded in the twelfth century; in fact it might almost be said that Thetford became more famous by reason of its Priory than when it was the seat of a Bishop. The reason for this extra-

ordinary fame was that which promoted the wealth and renown of so many religious establishments in olden times—the possession of relics or treasures with the power of working miracles. The phenomenon is not unknown on the Continent to-day, of course, but it is doubtful if even Lourdes would cap a list which included the restoration of speech to the dumb and of sight to the blind with an announcement concerning the restoration of life to the dead! By such infamous promises, however, not only Thetford but many another priory flourished in the middle ages, and however one may regret the importunities of the eighth Henry and their consequent destruction of much beautiful architecture one cannot regret the suppression of practices which were little, if at all, short of heretical. Certainly Henry's followers blotted out the Priory of St. Mary pretty thoroughly; here and there are indeterminate piles of masonry, but almost the only recognizable relic of the priory is the Gate House, a flint and freestone building of no great beauty.

It is difficult enough to conjure up the past glories of Thetford Priory; difficult indeed to believe that this was the place of interment of the Duke of Norfolk whose funeral procession we saw leave Framlingham. Yet here is an extract from a contemporary description of the ceremony:

"Within the choir was a place bounded with double bars, all hung with black cloth, garnished with escutcheons of his arms; also within the bars was made a hearse, with five principals which bore seven hundred lights; also there was in wax one hundred bedesmen in mourning, their bedes in their hands; also about the hearse went a valence of black sarsenet,

fringed with black silk and Venice gold. Within the hearse over the corpse was a cloth of majesty, and for the better garnishing the said hearse there were eight bannerols of his descent and marriages and one hundred pencils of his bays and devices. . . . Then Carlisle herald, wearing the coat of the Duke deceased, went to the church door of the abbey, where he conducted the knight up to the offering wearing the armour of the duke departed, riding on a courser trapped with fine cloth of gold, bearing in his hands the said duke's axe, with the point downwards, and so right to the choir door . . . then came to the sexton of the abbey, challenging the said horse for his fee, on which the knight alighted and was led to the offering; and Carlisle herald going before him he offered the axe to the bishop with the point downwards, who delivered it to Carlisle. . . .

"Then the bishop calling to him Carlisle herald told him now is the time to declare the deeds of this noble prince. Then Carlisle began and said For the soul of the right noble and mighty prince, Thomas Duke of Norfolk, marshal of England and late treasurer of same, counsellor to the king our sovereign lord, knight and companion of the noble order of the garter. . . . Then six gentlemen who were ready took him from under the hearse and laid him into his tomb, the bishop saying the usual services, after which he took a spade in his hand and throwing a little earth on the noble corpse he tarried till the head officers had broken their staves over the grave and thrown them therein, on which were great lamentations. . . ."

Elsewhere in Thetford may be discovered the remains of rival establishments. St. Mary's was a Dominican Friary founded in the fourteenth century,

and there was a priory occupied by Canons of the Holy Sepulchre and dating from the 12th century; but the religious remains of Thetford are on the whole disappointing.

It need hardly be remarked that nothing remains of the building in which the early bishops officiated, ere Norwich provided a Cathedral.

A religious building of a very different character may however be mentioned. Thetford had a branch of the Society of Friends so early as the seventeenth century, and in Guildhall Street there stood untouched until recent years the humble little whitewashed cottage which was their first meeting-house. Curiously enough, its address used to be far less friendly than now, for until late years Guildhall Street bore the name Heathenman Street, a title which has been traced to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle's* name for the Danes who were so often unwelcome and uninvited visitors at Thetford.

By many the name came to be applied to the most noted of Thetford's "sons" of modern times—Tom Paine. This remarkable personage was born at Thetford in 1737, his father being a staymaker who had been closely connected with the Quaker movement in the town. From youth he seems to have been of a nature that was, to say the least, independent, and after holding various posts in England for brief periods he sailed for America. He arrived at a moment which gave his peculiar talents much desired scope, and he was soon hard at work turning out pamphlets. Of his first, *Common Sense*, advocating complete independence, Washington remarked that it had "worked a powerful change in the minds of many men." *Common Sense* was fol-

lowed by *Crisis*, and those writings brought him the post of Secretary to the Congressional Committee of Foreign Affairs, a position he exchanged later for the clerkship of Pennsylvania legislature. *The Rights of Man*, by which Paine is principally remembered to-day, appeared in 1791. It was intended as a reply to Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution* and over a million and a half copies were sold—not without peril to the circulators, one of whom was sentenced to fourteen years' transportation for his hand in it. Paine now spent several years in Paris, writing *The Age of Reason*, advocating Deism as preferable to Christianity or Atheism; a work which lost him many former friends. He died in New York in 1809, and ten years later Cobbett brought his bones to England, but what has happened to them no man knoweth.

Paine's birthplace is passed on the left as the town is entered from London Road. Close by will be noticed a fine Elizabethan half-timber building which preserves the outlines of a watchman's box of days gone by. Thetford, however, has many such ancient buildings; the most prominent is the old "Spread Eagle" Hotel. For many centuries this has been a noted figure in the official life of the place, proclamations being posted at the Corner, and the yard of the "Spread Eagle" being the point of departure and arrival of most of the coaches. With the coming of the railway the fine old inn fell upon quieter times; but the internal-combustion engine has done much to restore its prosperity, and if the ghosts of old who assuredly haunt its yard do not approve of every kind of car which pulls in there, they must assuredly applaud the adventurous spirit

which draws so many motorists down this fine road.

Thetford stands partly in Norfolk and partly in Suffolk, and by choosing your stance you can plant one foot in each county. But a more pleasurable and lasting amusement is to stroll alongside the river, especially if the trees are lightly stirred by a breeze and the sunlight glints on the waters and casts dense black shadows on the undersides of the curious erections known as "staunches."

Thetford is so healthily situated that more than once the suggestion has been made that it might successfully embark on a career as a health resort. In summer it is certainly a most excellent centre for wide-flung excursions across the neighbouring heathlands, and if in winter the skating is not followed as enthusiastically as at St. Moritz it may be that memory still lingers of that fateful day in the sixteenth century when certain inhabitants were charged with "playing at skaites on Christmas Day" and, as we read in a local guide-book, "were ordered to kneel down in St. Cuthbert's Church before the whole congregation and pray God to forgive them."

Away to the east, beyond the valley of the Little Ouse, are three little towns that must not be forgotten in our peregrinations. These are Diss, Eye and Botesdale. The last, about twelve miles off, occupies the sides of the Bury-Norwich road for over a mile of that thoroughfare. It has little in itself to tempt the explorer, but Diss is remarkable in its situation around the shores of an East Anglian "lake" called Diss Mere—the name Diss is by some derived from the O.E. word for pond, or mere—and for its memories of Skelton, the arch-enemy of Wolsey. He was

rector here and the virulence of his invective—aimed at the great churchman—was part of his "genius," for his satiric verse has, even now, a "bite" to it!

Eye stands near Hoxne and the Waveney and is a very ancient place. Its "Honour" was held from the Crown by a succession of notables ever since Edric the Falconer of Edward Confessor received it from his nominal master. Edric's home is identified with the earthwork just to the west of the scanty ruins of the Norman castle. Eye church has a fine and lofty tower of stone and flint and was once part of the Benedictine priory founded by the Norman Malets who occupied the fortress. The church possesses one of the most beautiful screens in Suffolk and also has many interesting architectural features.

To the south of Thetford is what might be called the "Bloomfield country." It is a melancholy thought that one who is remembered principally on account of "The Farmer's Boy" should have spent most of his life working at a cobbler's last in a garret, his rural experiences having been limited to the early days of his youth; and some idea of his passionate love of the countryside is to be gained when one remembers that the well-known song was written on the strength of a few months spent at a relative's farm at Sapriston. But he was too puny a lad for farm work, so off to London he was bundled, there to be taught the cobbler's trade by an uncle doubtless well-meaning but deplorably lacking in any appreciation of the surroundings his nephew needed as well for his bodily health as for the appeasement of his spirit. As it was, the boy worked at his last from morn till night, and as he cobbled so he composed; often under such pressure that it is said he would prepare as

many as a hundred lines and yet would have no opportunity of conveying them to paper, sometimes for several days on end.

The tragedy was that by such methods his health became so undermined that when at last he was offered a post that would have brought him comparative luxury and certainly time to woo the muse, he found himself unable to carry out the required duties, simple as they were. So he relapsed, and in pitiful circumstances he died at Shefford in 1823. Yet this is the man to whom we owe "The Farmer's Boy"—a work which, though it may not be great poetry, occupies a definite place in our literature.

For archæologists there could hardly be a better holiday centre than the Thetford district, although perhaps Brandon may be allowed as a serious rival. A gloriously open road leads thither from Thetford, mile upon mile of heather and bracken and woodland, the haunt of rabbits innumerable and of great choirs of curlews. Formerly the district was the home of the great bustard, but those days, alas, are no more. On the other hand the rabbits multiply exceedingly and defy all kinds of efforts to keep them from trespassing. Wire netting abounds, but even a one-inch mesh is insufficient to keep back the young rabbit, which has shown itself capable of squeezing through even such a tiny orifice.

With the plethora of rabbits is, latterly, a relative shortage of trees, and since the Great War the Thetford afforestations have attracted considerable attention not only on account of their extent but for the careful and scientific manner in which the work has been done—work that will bear, it is hoped, fruits far more valuable even than the timber which is the

main purpose of the plantation. In the period 1921–1926 the Thetford Forest is said to have expanded from four thousand acres to thirty thousand—a much greater area than the New Forest. These are far-and-away the most important afforestation schemes ever undertaken in England. In the old days what plantings were made were done with the view of satisfying future naval requirements; the iron furnaces depleted Sussex of some of its finest timber, and old Britain's "hearts of oak" took a good deal more. But nowadays, it seems, the afforester has his eye (in a strictly metaphorical sense, of course) on silk stockings, and instead of planting acorns that "tall oaks" may grow he plants seedlings of such soft-wood trees as fir and pine, larch and spruce, which furnish excellent pulp fibre to form the basis of artificial silk!

In such a way is the most modern tendency of fashion imposed upon the same district which has supplied the earliest evidence of mankind! Everybody has heard of the "Neanderthal man," but it is not always realized that between Mildenhall and Thetford most valuable evidence has been secured towards assigning geologically the age of this far, far distant ancestor of ours. In an interesting contribution to the *Illustrated London News*, Mr. J. Reid Moir explained the position of the Suffolk discoveries in the following words: "In order to gain a satisfactory idea of the age of Neanderthal man it is necessary to examine some area where he camped in the open, which has been exposed to the free play of geological forces since Mousterian days. Fortunately, such a terrain is present in certain parts of East Anglia, where definite 'stations' of this period exist, and by their positions speak eloquently of the

changes in the earth's surface that have occurred since these sites were occupied by ancient man.

"From this standpoint the most significant of the East Anglian camping-places of Mousterian man is, without question, that situated at High Lodge, near Mildenhall, Suffolk. This site has been known to archæologists for many years, and a quantity of excellent and typical implements found there from time to time. The Mousterian 'station' of High Lodge occupies a position on the side of a hill at about 120 feet above sea-level, and the flint implements, which are quite unabraded, are found in a brick earth resting in a hollow eroded in an ancient Boulder clay of glacial origin, which formed the land surface in those days in this part of East Anglia. There is no doubt that water accumulated in this hollow, or channel, and, as at other sites in Suffolk, Palæolithic hunters took up their abode upon its bank, attracted by the game of various kinds that frequented such places. Now when an examination of the sections exposed at High Lodge is made, a number of most interesting facts are observable. In the first place, the hollow filled with brick earth is seen, on its eastern side, to be covered by a deposit, about 16 feet in thickness, of chalky Boulder clay, demonstrating that since Neanderthal man lived at this spot, an ice sheet has advanced and retreated over the country. And, as there is no reason to believe that such a phenomenon occurred except with extreme slowness, this conclusion becomes of great importance in arriving at a reliable estimate as to the antiquity of the Mousterian epoch. Secondly, examination of High Lodge reveals another and very impressive fact. For it is seen that the greater part

of the hollow containing brick earth is cut off by the slope of the hill to the west, and on this side the ground sinks down gradually to the level of the immense expanse of the Fens. Thus, it is obvious that the whole of this area, 1,306 square miles in extent, has been eroded since Neanderthal man lived at High Lodge.

"Further, there is good reason to believe, that, after the disappearance of the glaciation responsible for this stupendous event, the people—possibly of the Neanderthal type—of upper Mousterian times, again inhabited East Anglia. So that the period of this cultural phase must have been of very long duration, as was indicated by deposits in the cavern at Le Moustier in the south of France. Following upon the evacuation of East Anglia by the Mousterians there came, in succession, the people of upper Palæolithic times, with their separate and distinct culture. Towards the close of this epoch the eastern counties again experienced a very low temperature, the passing away of which resulted in the deposition of hill washes of considerable depth over the living sites of upper Palæolithic man—the deepenings of tributary valleys, and the laying down of widespread sheets of gravel in the lower parts of the main river valleys. These changes mark the close of geological activity, of any very marked kind, in East Anglia."

One has almost uncannily real contact with the works of Neolithic man at "Grime's Graves" at Weeting, north of Brandon. The term grave was applied probably because such a word ran smoothly off the tongue in succession to Grime, and Grime, of course, is none other than the gentleman of ill-repute who is commemorated by the Grims Dykes in various

parts of England and Wales. Actually, the graves were deep pits sunk into the ground by Neolithic man for the purpose of extracting flints. In the British Museum is an interesting model showing how the funnel-shaped opening passed down through the Boulder clay and the upper chalk to the hard chalk some thirty feet below the surface. What is more interesting about these pits, however, is the manner in which tunnels were pierced from them into the chalk in such a way that the pits became interconnected by a series of galleries. When the "Graves" were examined some sixty years ago a most dramatic discovery was made in one of the tunnels, at the end of which three fresh hollows had been made in the face of the chalk with the intention of carrying the tunnel still farther into the chalk. Three separate workmen appear to have been engaged upon these new hollows, and when two of them left off work one day (how many thousands of years ago?) they left in front of their "jobs" the two horn implements with which they were removing the chalk. They never came back to their task, however, for the roof of the tunnel fell in, and so when during last century a party of archæologists excavated the site they had the wonderful experience of lighting upon a Neolithic piece of work actually as it was in Neolithic times. So undisturbed had the scene been that the finger-prints of the workmen still remained on the chalk-powdered picks! Beside the model to which I have alluded as being in the British Museum are some rough "carvings" in chalk made doubtless by these same men, and at Bloomsbury too are the selfsame picks they wielded so long ago.

Three thousand years at least; yet they still work

flints in the neighbourhood. Brandon, in fact, is one of the few places in the world where the age-old industry still survives. The present use of the flints "knapped" is in connection with rather obsolete guns, particularly those used by the natives in certain parts of Africa and elsewhere; but in the days when flintlocks were still in general vogue Brandon was a busy place indeed—a veritable arsenal. The few men still resident in Brandon who carry on flint knapping are well used to being visited and questioned, and although these accomplished craftsmen make the work appear so simple as to border on the trivial, yet the sight of a flint knapper at work is worth storing.

Not merely gun flints have come from Brandon, however. The ready market for stone implements of all kinds during last century encouraged these expert flint workers to copy arrow-heads and celts. Knives, saws and even fishhooks of flint were produced in enormous quantities, and it is almost beyond doubt that many of them came from Brandon. Of the morality of the proceeding this is no place to speak, but having experienced the joy of "planting" a spook artifact on a "learned" body I can sympathize with the Flint Jacks of Brandon.

How the mind is continually jerked back and forth through the centuries in East Anglia! Here we are at Brandon, considering almost the oldest form of sharp-edged weapon, when suddenly a signpost confronts us with the word Lakenheath—the Lakenheath which was so long the home of that family which produced Kitchener of Khartoum, the far-seeing soldier who forged the most wonderful weapon of recent times—"Kitchener's Armies"!

The whole of this vast heathland is known as

Breckland, "brecks" being those portions of the countryside which have from time to time tempted agriculturists to try and cultivate them. But it is an unproductive soil, and apart from the forests and the rabbits it is mainly given over to shootings. A curious phenomenon occurred here in the seventeenth century. In Lord F. Hervey's notes to Reyce it is thus described: "Downham was given the name of Santon Downham in consequence of its baptism by sand in 1688. . . . This strange deluge originated in Lakenheath, some five miles south-west of Downham, and soon occupied eight or ten acres. As it moved on it expanded, so that when the flood had proceeded about four 'forward' miles it overspread some six thousand acres. On nearing Downham the sand seemed to have slackened its pace. It continued ten or twelve years on the outskirts of the village, doing no great harm, but with a singular perversity it ran faster uphill than down. At last it 'rushed' the village and buried several houses." Eventually the encroachment was stayed by very similar means to those employed on the seaward side of the Holkam estate, in Norfolk; but Downham retains in its name the memory of what must have been a very uncomfortable time for the inhabitants. It lies north of the Brandon-Thetford Road, between it and the river.

MILDENHALL.

Thetford Warren, Lakenheath Warren, Wangford Warren, all are sections of this wonderful Breckland,

though few motorists rushing Norfolkwards deign to turn aside at Mildenhall from the really magnificent road to make the really worth-while detour via Brandon. It is worth making even for the sake of Brandon itself, with its fine old bridge.

Mildenhall is an interesting place with a splendid church. Some ruins adjoining the beautiful old Manor House date from the days of Sir Thomas Hanmer, whose garden was celebrated for the quality of its grapes. Each year Sir Thomas used to send a present of grapes to the Queen, and so careful was he to preserve their luscious form that the precious fruit used to be carried all the way to London (some seventy miles) on men's backs, lest otherwise the jolting of the way might spoil them. Another queer procession that formerly was met on this same London Road consisted of turkeys, of which literally millions must have toddled and gobbled their way up to London and the fateful market ere the railway company began to make special arrangements for a more speedy transference of the doomed birds.

Dedham
Gainsborough

ABBOT'S BRIDGE, ST. EDMUNDSBURY.

CHAPTER XII

MID-SUFFOLK

ARE there in the world any roads to compare with those of England? Is there in England any road to compare with that linking Newmarket, Thetford and Norwich with the Cambridge district? Straight, so straight that topping a rise you can see the way for miles ahead, it yet undulates so regularly that you only see bits of that road—the crests of the waves, so to speak. One long, glorious avenue is it, and happy are they who set out on a holiday by this road, for the sheer joy of such a way is itself a holiday.

As you swing up and down there comes a time when you cross the line of a great earthwork—one of the Dykes which score a dozen counties in our land and which are attributed to Grim—who is popularly supposed to have been the Devil in disguise. Certainly if he made even this section of Dyke he must have been possessed of supernatural powers. Beyond the Dyke we rise, and find ourselves on the Heath of Newmarket—a fine breezy spot the beauty of which is marred by countless telegraph poles advancing not in one row but in several; each row of posts being burdened with an abnormal number of wires. Notwith-

standing that they mar the picturesqueness of the Heath, there is something quite impressive in these poles, driving straight ahead and "dressed" with military precision. The regularity of their ranks accords well with the inflexible straightness of the road and calls to mind the ancient aqueducts of Italy as they go striding across the land with a lofty disregard for mere matters of topography.

Quiet enough the Heath may be to-day, but come here when racing is in progress on the course down yonder, and your speedometer will perforce tell a different tale!

In few parts of England is it still possible to visit towns intimately associated with horses and yet retaining an air of prosperity. The coaches have gone, and with them went the life of many a busy township; life which is only just returning as the petrol pump replaces the "livery and bait" of former days. Newmarket, motors notwithstanding, is still undeniably equine in interest. The main street smacks of horses, and every other man has the peculiarly knowing air that is the prerogative of those favoured with intimate knowledge of stable secrets. And all round the town are delightful residences—with equally delightful grounds—to which are attached well-built and capacious stables.

A very pleasant place, Newmarket, and even without risking the traffic-jams on race days one can see some very pretty gallops by taking the trouble to watch the horses at exercise. The "breeding" that shines through the appearance of a first-class race-horse puts a new complexion on the much-abused adage of the spelling books of the late Mr. Mavor—"The horse is a noble animal."

One of the first problems the stranger will have to settle before asking his way onward will be the form of the name of the town where the remains of St. Edmund were finally laid. Bury St. Edmunds or St. Edmundsbury? Side with the railway and the post office, or with those of the opposite camp, as you will, but you will not overlook the schoolboy's explanation of the name as having reference to the fact that here St. Edmund was buried. No pun was intended, of course; the place was "Bury" in its earlier days —it became the bury or burgh of St. Edmund when the remains of that king and martyr were brought here from Hoxne in 903. Curious how place names grow! Not far from Bury, for instance, is a village which at one time answered merely to the name of Bradfield. Came a disastrous fire, however, and thenceforward the place was known as Bradfield Combust!

St. Mary's, Newmarket, and "White Hart" Yard.

Although Bury was a place of importance even before the tenth century, it was only after it had received the remains of the saintly Edmund that it began to attain its maximum importance. To receive the royal coffin a magnificent church was prepared; the shrine became immensely popular, miracles wrought by its influence were almost a daily occurrence, and during a Danish raid in the eleventh century it was thought advisable to remove the remains temporarily to London, whence they returned in state a year or

so later. In due course the sanctity they shed was increased by the enshrinement of the coals which heated the gridiron of St. Lawrence and various other relics of like sort.

Of those days we have as witness the ruins of the Abbey, the chronicles of Jocelin and Eadmer. What is more we have the ready interpretation of Carlyle, who in *Past and Present* very truly gave a valuable lead to his Professor Dryasdust. Read *Past and Present* before you go to Bury; read it again while there. Some of the moralizings are a little out of date now, but the pictures of the past are powerful as ever. Listen, for instance, to Abbot Samson's story of his pilgrimage to Rome "when all clergy carrying letters for our Lord the Pope Alexander were laid hold of and some were clapt in prison, some were hanged. . . . I, however, pretended to be Scotch, and putting on the garb of a Scotsman, and taking the gesture of one, walked along; and when anybody mocked at me I would brandish my staff in the manner of that weapon they call *gaveloc* (pike), uttering comminatory words after the way of the Scotch. . . . Having at last obtained a letter from our Lord the Pope according to my wishes I turned homewards again." When the soldiers of a certain town seized him and set about searching him for the suspected letter, Samson was quite equal to the occasion. "While they examined every stitch and rag of me . . . I put my hand into the leather scrip that I wore, wherein our Lord the Pope's letter lay, close by a little jug I had for drinking out of; and the Lord God so pleasing, and St. Edmund, I got out both the letter and the jug together, in such a way that, extending my arm aloft, I held the letter hidden between jug and hand: they saw the jug, but

the letter they saw not. And thus I escaped out of their hands in the name of the Lord." Truly, as we look upon these ruins with the aid of Carlyle, we may well say with him "there are living human beings there, who chant, loud-braying, their matins, nones, vespers, awakening echoes, not to the bodily ear alone. St. Edmund's shrine, perpetually illuminated, glows ruddy through the night, and through the night of centuries withal. Bells clang out; on great occasions all the bells. We have processions, Preachings, Festivals, Christmas Plays, Mysteries, shown in the churchyard, at which time the Townsfolk sometimes quarrel." And through all moves the resourceful figure of Samson. . . .

Rarely are we able so vividly to picture the past; and the Abbey Gateway and the other remains of the Abbey are frames of no little worth, since they are the self-same frames in which the pictured incidents actually occurred.

If the gateway is the chief remnant of the Abbey, it has a very noble companion in the massive Norman tower against St. James's Church. Originally this gateway stood in the Abbey wall and before the western entrance to the great church of the Abbey, to which it formed a kind of outer gateway. Now it seems to be endeavouring to edge along to St. James's Church for company, a rather pathetic relic of former magnificence.

Bury still bears so many traces of its former religious communities that one can hardly appreciate the place until something has been grasped of its history and development, and for that purpose *Past and Present* is incomparable.

There are, however, many spots less intimately bound

up with the religious communities, and they can be easily seen in an hour's walk from Angel Hill, the broad space before the fine old Abbey Gate. We are here at the north-west corner of the precincts; to the east Mustow Street marks the boundary, and as we walk southward along the western limits of the great Abbey, we are abruptly jerked out of the past by the sight of the "Angel" Inn, where happened the rich adventures of Pickwick and Jingle. Then back to the past we slip as beyond St. James's Church there comes into view the great Norman tower which formed the western entrance to the Abbey and which stood exactly opposite the west doorway of the great Church. The south-west corner of the precincts is reached at St. Mary's Church, which should be entered for the sake of the beautiful ceiling to the porch raised by John Notyngham, a local merchant who thrived at the time the church was building—in the fifteenth century. But St. Mary's has more illustrious memories; for here was laid Mary Tudor, she who married the great Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. Originally buried in the Abbey Church, her remains were brought here at the Dissolution, when the Abbey was sold.

ANGEL HILL, ST. EDMUNDSBURY.

From Angel Hill, Abbey Gate leads westward to the site of the Markets, the Town Hall, and the building housing a very interesting Museum. Contrary to the general order of things, the structure is even more interesting than its contents, for it dates from the

twelfth century. Locally it is known as Moyses Hall, and Moyses is said to be merely a corruption of Moses. Need it be added that Moses is also said to have been a Jew, therefore a money-lender, therefore one of those with whom Abbot Samson dealt so drastically? Surmise as you like while you examine the collection of antiques within!

In addition to the Abbey itself, many remains of which are scattered in and around the Botanic Garden, there are scanty remains of other early churches—St. Mary's Chapel and St. Stephen's Hospital along by Eastgate Station, for instance—but apart from these Bury is chiefly interesting on account of a certain individuality that is not easily defined, but is none the less deep-seated. So long ago as Defoe's time it was less notable for its buildings than for those who moved among them . . . "the number of gentry who dwell in the town and near it, the affluence and plenty they live in, the sweet air they breathe in, and the pleasant country they have to go abroad in." The town he found "crowded with nobility and gentry, and all sorts of the most agreeable company, and as the company invites, so there is the appearance of pleasure upon the very situation. . . . They that live at Bury are supposed to live there for the sake of the company." Thus the author of *Robinson Crusoe* in the account of his tour in East Anglia. It is interesting, by the way, to compare the observations of this industrious "chiel" with one who came "takin' notes" a century or so later. In *Pickwick* and *David Copperfield* Dickens showed that his hurried visits to East Anglia during his reporting days were yet made to serve a double purpose.

The perilous journey which Abbot Samson made in

the disguise of a Scotsman was occasioned by the necessity for finding an incumbent for the church of Woolpit, which lies a few miles eastward from Bury. This place is of further and greater interest, however, on account of the legend which has grown up out of the supposed origin of the name—Wolf-pit. As a matter of fact the name itself is sufficiently interesting as a reminder of times when the farmers of Suffolk and Norfolk were troubled with the depredations of more fearsome beasts than rabbits. The legend of Woolpit, as related by William de Newburgh, runs somewhat as follows: "Near the village are some very old pits, out of which there once came, in harvest time, two children, a boy and a girl. Their bodies were of a green colour, and they wore dresses of some unknown stuff. They were caught and taken to the village, where for many months they would eat nothing but beans. They gradually lost their green colour. The boy soon died: the girl survived and married a man of Lynn. At first they could speak no English, but when they were able to do so they said they belonged to the land of St. Martin, where as they were watching their father's sheep they heard a loud noise like the ringing of the bells of St. Edmunds Monastery. And then all at once they found themselves among the reapers in the harvest field at Woolpit. Their country was a Christian one and they had churches. There was no sun there, but only a faint twilight, but beyond a broad river there lay a band of light." In such a manner did William de Newburgh anticipate Dean Swift and Baron Munchausen!

Woolpit is midway between Bury and Stowmarket, the latter a busy little place with a church that is worth visiting for the sake of its monument to Milton's

tutor, Young. The poet is said to have come here to see Young while the latter was vicar and to have planted a mulberry tree in commemoration of the visit. In the same connection it is interesting to recall that Crabbe spent some of his schooldays at Stowmarket.

Church bells have many "lawful occasions," but surely no stranger cause was ever found than that which, according to the *Suffolk Garland*, caused Stowmarket bells to peal forth one January day in 1787. It was related that in that year a farmer of Stowupland sold his wife to a neighbour for the sum of five guineas. Not an immense sum, you would think, even in those days; yet the farmer was so pleased with the bargain that he presented the wife with a guinea wherewith to buy herself a new gown, and himself went to Stowmarket to order the bells to be rung in commemoration of the occasion! But the pith of the report is contained in the editorial note accompanying the report quoted in the *Garland*. This report was printed in the *Ipswich Journal* "as news in ordinary columns, without any remark as to its being an unusual occurrence." By which is meant, no doubt, the compact; but what a revelation of the lady is contained in the order to ring the bells!

Our way lies southward from Bury, however, past Bradfield Combust. A mile or so farther south is Cockfield, where quite astonishingly one meets Robert Louis Stevenson. Here, at Cockfield Rectory, occurred some of the most important moments in the life of that wonderful man. The full story of the influence of Cockfield on Stevenson was told by the late Sir Sidney Colvin, but here it was that Colvin and Stevenson first met; here, as Stevenson's biographer put it, "began that friendship

which was so immediately helpful, which survived all shocks of time and change, which separation by half the world seemed only to render more close and assiduous and which has its monument in the Vailima Letters, in the two volumes of Stevenson's correspondence and in the final presentation of his works." Stevenson at the time of the meeting was but 23 years of age, Colvin only 28 ; and it was by " such technical hints as a classical training and a five years' seniority " enabled him to give that Colvin was able to be of such service to the young man . . . " this very unacademical type of Scottish youth, a spirit the most interesting and full of promise."

Not only the personalities of Cockfield impressed Stevenson but the scenery also, and he made excursions to neighbouring villages of which many notes have been passed down to us. One day he went to Melford and Lavenham, " both exceptionally placid, beautiful old English towns. Melford scattered all round a big green, with an Elizabethan Hall and Park, great screens of trees that seem twice as high as trees should seem and everything else like it ought to be in a novel, and what one never expects to see in reality, made me cry out how good we were to live in Scotland, for the many hundredth time."

Lavenham still merits Stevenson's praise, being exceptionally rich in timbered houses that have been sufficiently cared for to wear a cheerful air. But the gem of Lavenham is the church, the tower of which plays hide-and-seek behind the trees as one travels along the Melford road. The tower is very lofty, and seems the more lofty as you ascend the village street by reason of its being situated at almost the highest point of the parish. The rest of the church

is proportionately large—Lavenham at one time was prosperous with weaving—and inside and out the details are remarkably fine.

Melford also at one time hummed with the looms of the weavers, and although the clothing trade has gone north and west, the former prosperity of the town is reflected in the numerous fine old houses and the really splendid church, a building of such proportions that one instinctively remarks, "Ah, that's why it's Long Melford." The tower is no mean height, but the nave and chancel of nearly twenty bays makes it appear almost squat! A curiosity of the church is the Lady Chapel, which is set apart, to the north-east of the main building.

The town is famed in *Lavengro* by reason of the pugilistic effort known as a Long Melford. You may think it worth while to question any modern Melfordians you encounter as to the origin of the punch, and its connection with this eminently peaceful spot.

Long Melford stands near an " elbow " of the Stour, where that river turns southward towards Sudbury. Half a dozen miles upstream is the fascinating old town of Clare. Long associated with the warlike family of Clare, the place boasts almost as a matter of course the remains of a castle—a great mound of earth surrounded by ditches and once surmounted by a keep. The mound is sufficiently venerable to suggest it knew something of the terrible raids of the Danes, albeit the spot is peaceful enough to-day, notwithstanding fearless attacks by the railway engineers.

Having been so long associated with the De Clare family, too, the town boasts more than one notable building (or its remains) founded by members of that

family. The church we now see, however, is the successor to that founded by one of the Clares about 1260, and, beyond the river, the Augustinian establishment which also owed its inception to that family is now represented by quite a few fragments built into a modern residence on the site. Clare stands in a very pretty environment ; and the name itself is sufficiently beautiful to bear frequent repetition in these days of Mugtowns and Jonesvilles. Clare is the kind of name to roll across the palate in order that the full, lovely flavour of the word may be enjoyed.

From Clare to Sudbury the Stour flows in a course that shapes itself roughly like an inverted L. Time is short, however, and we will yield to the temptation to take a " short cut." A dangerous experiment as to time it will be, almost without doubt: was ever a cross-country " cut " along by lanes a saving of time ? But then, should we take these cuts if they did save time ? Let us be honest and admit, since the end of our East Anglian tour is in sight, that we never have believed any short cut to be shorter than the more prosaic main road, and that our only reason for assiduously asking for quick routes has been an excuse for getting off the beaten track.

So we find our way across the river at Clare and proceed to explore the little corner of country marked on the maps by such names as Foxearth, the three Belchamps, and by farms with such charming names as " Larks in the Wood " (what a week-end address !), Shearing Place and so on. And in due time we reach the main road again, *terra firma* as it were, at Ballingdon.

As we ride over the hills along the road from Braintree, Sudbury is revealed suddenly, spread over the

floor of the Stour valley—a sea of grey and red roofs sentinelled by three church towers of promising appearance.

At one time there was some point in naming this place South Bury in contradistinction to North Bury, or Norwich; but to-day, except that each lies down by a river, there are few points of similarity between the city and the town. Sudbury bears traces of having been at one time much more attractive, and even now it must not be too hastily dismissed,

On a Suffolk Waterway.

for an inconsequent stroll through its byways will reveal many a pleasant relic in the shape of timbered houses, well carved and with drooping gables. The principal interests of the place, however, are wrapped around the personalities of three men of natures as widely different as the times in which they lived.

The earliest son of Sudbury to achieve fame was Simon Theobald, who was born here in the fourteenth century and lived to become Archbishop of Canterbury and Chancellor of England at a time when those positions were even more important, and certainly more perilous, than to-day. As Simon of Sudbury he is well known to modern Canterbury pilgrims, for

it is through the West Gate that the Cathedral city is entered from London and the West Gate is almost the only visible remains of the building work Simon did there; his contribution to the Cathedral having consisted principally of "foundation work"—essential, but unseen. Well had it been for Simon perhaps if he had been content to emulate that portion of his work, for in the late fourteenth century any office-holder was fair game for enemies and the peril of a post increased with its importance.

From the rusticity of Sudbury Simon rapidly passed via the University of Paris to the pomps of the Court of the Pope. In due course he was appointed chaplain to Innocent VI and in 1356 came as Nuncio to Edward III. He became Bishop of London, and on the see of Canterbury falling vacant he was in 1375 translated thither by Papal Bull. Politics and religion were closely intermingled in those days, and his unhappy conflict with Wycliff was far more than a religious controversy; one, too, which added to the unpopularity his occasional tactlessness had earned for him.

The crisis came soon after his appointment to the office of Chancellor of England, when he announced the imposition of a Poll Tax. Public indignation passed from words to action at this, and the unfortunate Simon became the quarry of Wat Tyler's Kentish band. The final scene occurred on 14th June, 1381, when Simon, who was with the king in the Tower of London, was dragged forth to Tower Hill and there cruelly executed, his head being stuck on a pole and exhibited to all.

Next day it was, however, taken down by order of Walworth, at that time Lord Mayor, and with the corpse conveyed to Canterbury, where it was interred

in the Cathedral, near to the tomb of St. Dunstan. In the popular mind, Simon's violent death had a peculiar significance: had he not rebuked some pilgrims on their way to Becket's shrine—then at the zenith of its fame? Said the people, he had; they said, more, that Simon's death was to be attributed to "the avenging spirit of the incensed saint."

In recent times when the tomb was accidentally opened Simon's body was seen within, wrapped in cerecloth, but a leaden ball occupied the vacant place of the head, and if when you are at Sudbury you go to St. Gregory's Church you may still be shown there a skull which is said to have been that of the unfortunate Simon. And as you handle the somewhat gruesome relic, you may care to remember that in the midst of his fame Simon did not forget the place of his birth. In 1373 he bought, in conjunction with his brother John of Chertsey, the church of St. Gregory and rebuilt the west end. On the site of the house in which he had been born he built a college with a warden and five priests and made the church collegiate.

From this tragic figure it is a relief to turn to the happier career of Sudbury's most famous son—Thomas Gainsborough. The story of Gainsborough's career is balm to practical jokers called upon to "justify" their pranks. Genius will out, but the emergence of Gainsborough's genius might have been postponed indefinitely had not "Tom Peartree" introduced him to Thicknesse, who in turn introduced him to the fashionable world at Bath and so to fame.

The Gainsboroughs must indeed have been an amusing family. There is the picture of Gainsborough *père*, for instance, who is said to have enlivened his legitimate business visits to Holland with a little

smuggling, and who was one evening accosted by a revenue officer desirous of viewing the contents of the trap which Gainsborough was driving homeward. The merchant's refusal to permit search probably increased the officer's suspicions, until at last Gainsborough apparently relented.

"All right, I'll show you what's in the cart." As a matter of fact it happened to contain a few white shrouds. Gainsborough quickly slipped one of these over him and then suddenly reappeared, with an unearthly groan which sent the exciseman fearfully flying!

With such a parent it is hardly surprising to find that young Tom Gainsborough was equal to the occasion when his schoolmaster was told to give him no more holidays unless written authorization was forthcoming from his parents. Tom immediately prepared a note saying "Give Tom a holiday"; which was so successful that he prepared a small store of such missives for future use. Unfortunately, these were discovered, an accident which led Gainsborough senior to utter the famous remark "Tom will be hanged." Only purists will deny the old man the credit of a remarkably accurate, if unconscious, prediction of the fate of the young artist!

In such manner was the way paved for Tom Peartree. The incident is well known but worth re-telling. As young Gainsborough sat quietly sketching in the orchard behind the Sudbury home a rough-looking fellow peered over the wall and, seeing no one about, proceeded to help himself to some of the Gainsborough pears. Quickly young Tom sketched the thief: and the sketch was good enough to help the identification. The young artist was so tickled with the idea that

he made a life-size coloured facsimile of the portrait. This was painted on board, cut to the shape of a man's head and shoulders. The rest of the tale is best told in the words of Thicknesse, then Lieut.-Governor of Landguard Fort. "Soon after Gainsborough's remove to Ipswich," he wrote afterwards, "while I was walking in the garden of the Editor of the Ipswich *Journal*, I perceived a melancholy faced countryman leaning over the garden wall. I pointed him out to the printer and he, with great gravity of face, said he had been there all day; that he pitied him, believing he was either mad or miserable. . . . I did not perceive until I stepped up that it was a wooden man painted upon a shaped board."

So far from being piqued at having foisted upon him a "shadow instead of a substance" (according, at any rate, to his own version of the affair) Thicknesse invited Gainsborough to Landguard, commissioned him to paint the scene, and subsequently had the picture engraved. As a result Gainsborough became established as the foremost *landscape* painter of his time. As a more important result, Thicknesse "adopted" Gainsborough, carried him off to Bath and gave him the opportunities for portrait-painting he had so vainly sought in London.

Tom Peartree's memorable introduction was effected in the seventeen-fifties. Tom Gainsborough was then about thirty years of age, having been born in 1727—over two hundred years ago. The exact date of his birth does not seem to be known, but it is established that he was baptized in the Independent Chapel at Sudbury on May 7th, 1727.

His fortune in finding an influential friend is well illustrated by the lot of two of his brothers. Humphrey

Gainsborough, for instance, was a keen scientist and was even credited with the invention of that kind of steam engine for which Watt obtained a patent in 1769. For all that he was destined to remain an Independent minister at Henley.

Jack Gainsborough—"Scheming Jack"—was no less a genius in his way than Tom. He has been charged with lack of application; but it is possible that application would have come with a little encouragement in place of the derision which greeted his scientific endeavours. He dabbled in aviation and navigation, and claimed to have invented a plan for making a wheel revolve in a bucket of still water (though this smacks suspiciously of a Gainsborough joke). But the Gainsborough love of a joke was well indulged by Jack in his encounter with the innkeeper who commissioned him to paint a sign, but would not pay what "Scheming Jack" considered an adequate fee. "Pay me my figure," he said, "and I will tie your bull up with a golden chain."

But the innkeeper was obdurate. Seemingly complacent, Jack proceeded to paint the bull, and on completion of the work departed with his fee. But next morning, after a heavy rain, lo! the bull had vanished! Scheming Jack was immediately sent for and shown the bare board. "Well," he told the innkeeper, "you wouldn't pay for the golden chain, and now you see what's happened."

The young rascal had painted the bull in water-colour: presumably wrapping up varnish paints in his dark allusion to a "golden chain."

From such a family sprang Thomas Gainsborough. Despondent young artists of to-day may revive their drooping spirits with cogitations upon the fate of

Hedingham Castle
C. 1830

Gainsborough had he let his early non-success in London depress him unduly! The world owes a considerable debt to Tom Peartree.

Thoroughly in keeping with this air of frivolity is Dickens's picture of Sudbury under the disguise of "Eatanswill." With the merits or demerits of the story as a criticism of Sudbury politics I am not concerned, but the excellent devices by which the Buffs and the Blues sought to outwit each other—the green parasols ("five and forty at seven and sixpence apiece"), the thirty-three voters locked securely in the coach-house, and other moves of this "spirited contest" make most excellent reading. Nor can one forget that the town which raised Thomas Gainsborough was also the venue of those "feasts of reason and flows of soul" over which Mrs. Leo Hunter presided, and under whose auspices first appeared the lines:

> Can I view thee panting, lying
> On thy stomach, without sighing;
> Can I unmoved see thee dying
> On a log,
> Expiring frog?

"Beautiful!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, and with no less reason we too may exclaim "Beautiful!"

But East Anglia must yield to the claims of London, and so we climb the hill by which we descended into Sudbury and run south-westward towards Halstead and Chelmsford. But we are not yet quit of the spell of this fascinating region, and hardly have we come five miles when our progress is arrested by a signboard bearing the word MAPLESTEAD. Actually there are two Maplesteads, of which the farther is some three miles distant, but seizing on the fact that the nearer is less than one mile off our homeward road we sneak

off along a pleasant lane to pay a visit to the famous little round church. Londoners are fortunate in having within easy reach no fewer than three of these interesting specimens of architecture, each of which by its form speaks of its connection with the Knights Hospitaller. This at Little Maplestead is the latest and smallest of the trio; that at Cambridge is well known if only from its proximity to the main road, while the Temple Church in London is even more widely known. Maplestead church is said to date from 1186, but from this period only the walls and the eastern window of the apse can date. It is worthy of note that the chancel has no aisle, also that the nave and chancel are not aligned.

Having visited one Maplestead one had to go on to the other, or Greater. Here is a church with a Norman apse and an arch built partly of Roman bricks. Not far off is the fine mansion called Dynes Hall, erected in the reigns of two queens—Elizabeth and Anne—with the characteristics of each period. As there are two Maplesteads (which are presumed to have taken their name from the maple trees which abounded in the neighbourhood) so there are a couple of Hedinghams. That nearer the Maplesteads is named Castle Hedingham on account of the very impressive square keep that has watched over its fortunes since the twelfth century. Around the keep are remains of extensive earthworks that must have given much trouble to John's troops ere they managed to capture it in 1216. The Keep itself, by the way, is largely built of stone from Barnack, near Peterborough.

Even since we lunched at Clare we have encountered a wonderful variety of interests, and had we time we could profitably spend a day or two exploring the

country between Sudbury and Halstead. But evening draws on and London is still afar off, so must we resolutely fold up our large-scale maps and put away our guide-books and set the car towards London.

SKETCH MAP OF EAST ANGLIA.

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